

**SKETCHES FROM LIFE
IN DIXIE**

SAMUEL ALFRED BEADLE



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SKETCHES FROM LIFE IN DIXIE

BY
S. A. BEADLE.

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DEDICATION.

IT is, I believe, customary to dedicate one's work to a patron. I suppose one's friend might with as much grace bear the burden. When I remember the enthusiasm with which my friend always espouses my cause, and how tenaciously she clings to the few virtues I have, and how blind she is to my innumerable faults, I have no forbodings of evil when I approach her. To her, Aurelia W. Beadle, the wife of my youth, this poor memento of my faith is sincerely inscribed by

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

SOME years ago I was wandering about the waste places, thoroughfares and by-ways of a beautiful country

“Where the cypress and myrtle,
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime;
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime;”

and, as I was passing, I wrote a few simple sketches of the things that impressed me.

This land is commonly known as the Sunny South and is sometimes called “Dixie;” for this reason I call them *Sketches from Life in Dixie*.

Night before last I bundled them together, and sat down to admire the children of my fancy. No mother ever hung over the cradle of her first born with such delight as I did over them. For once these sketches had an audience; the universe was my theatre and my imagination filled it to the outer limits with eager listeners. I sat reading to them, far into the wee sma’ hours of the night, till the absence of applause brought me to my senses, and I stopped to hear the clock on the stroke of two. About this time Benjamin Beaumont came into my room, slapped me playfully on the shoulder, and said, “Sol, why don’t you bring this thing to an end? Write a preface and an advertisement for your book, publish it, and put it on the market. There are some good things in it.”

This disposed of my fancy; and brought me, for the first time in my life, down to real thought, for if there is anything that requires thought it is the preface of a

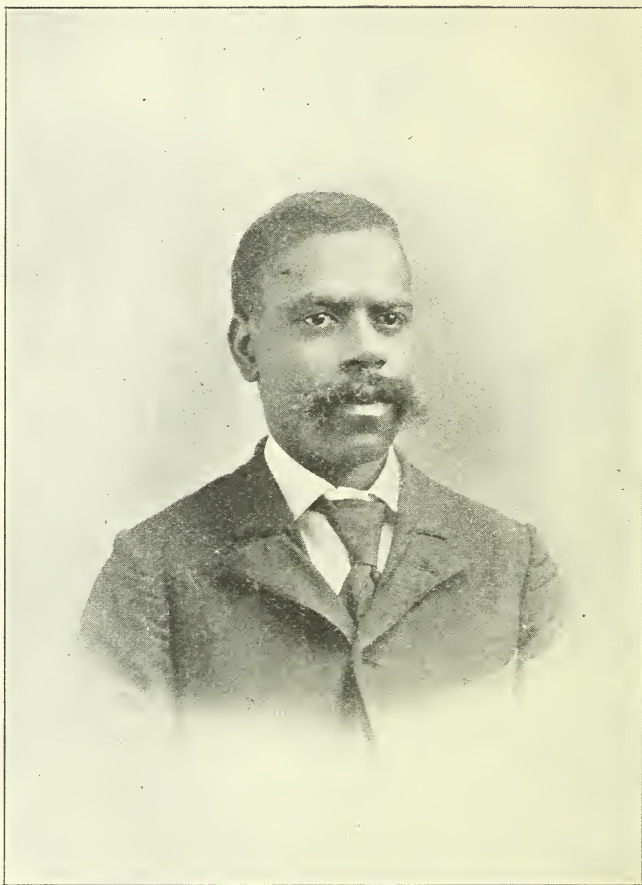
book. You may tip the pinions of your fancy with fiction, and let it flit aimlessly about the inner pages of your book if you will; but when it comes to writing the last page of it, and tacking it to the front, and calling it a preface, I should like to see you escape the thoughts of the critic. This thought murdered my fancy, and my audience vanished—only three of us remained, the Reviewer, the Critic, and I. For us a short preface will do; in short, since I come to think of it, the writing of the thing is a waste of energy; so I will put it off till another time and content myself with telling the simple truth, *Sketches from Life in Dixie* is but the work of a novice. He wrote them for amusement; and publishes them at the solicitation of his friend Benjamin Beaumont. If they are accepted by that vaccillating thing known as Public Opinion, he will be thankful: if they are spurned by it, he will not complain, for the cranky old thing is whimsical anyhow.

With patience I await the end, and subscribe myself

Yours truly,

S. A. BEADLE.

Jackson, Miss.



SAMUEL ALFRED BEADLE.

IMPROMPTU.

MANY and many a year ago
I heard of those ancient rhymers.
Those builders of our poetic lore,
The grand old vanished timers,
Were always born and never made:
That they by inspiration bade
The eulogies and melodies
From the spirit's emotions rise,
Filling the earth, the air, the skies
With beings from their paradise.
Of esthetic thought and rapture.

Then the muses chased the poets down
From infancy to hoariness.
With the genius' proffered crown
And surprised them in their idleness
With the coronation brilliancy
Of sweet poetic ecstasy.
When the metrical song moved along
In melody's natural measure.
A radiant royal pleasure.
Which the favored took at leisure
Without the minutest effort.

That this is true I sometimes feel.
And write a feeble line or two.
Whene'er the muses o'er me steal
And I fain would strike the lyre too:
But that "always born, never made,"
From the fanciful flight have stayed.

Brilliant spondee and sweet touchee,
Awaiting the inspiring tole,
To move the music of my soul
To the cadence of the poet's role,
Of proficiency without toil.

No, Nature has no favored ones,
All are what themselves would be;
Through endless toil Ambition's sons
Adorn themselves with victory:
So I will write it, right or wrong,
Everyone shall hear the song,
I wish to sing of Evelylin;
The chaste and lovely Evelylin,
Tho' all the measure set therein
Is not what it should have been,
To make the Criticaster's poem.

TWO HEARTS FOR ONE.

MANY years ago, on a cold, drizzly, freezing night in December, I, in company with my friend Le-grange, arrived at the home of Clarence Otto. During the whole of that cold, benumbing day, we had urged our jaded horses along the heavy road, with the proverbial hospitality of Otto ever and anon looming up before us, under the activity of our creative fancy; which bounded along before us displacing Otto's open fireplace where the hickory logs lay aglow, while the bleak wind without came whistling down from the poles, congealing the blood and leaving icicles in its path.

What is more interesting on a cold winter night, than that cheerful fire which ever glows on the southern hearth, for the weary traveler? Then give me a plate of English walnuts and occasional draughts of wine to urge my failing memory along that far away receding path, over which we passed when youth was full of adventures, and life one endless dream of pleasantries.

In due time our fancy grew into reality, for Otto received us into his beautiful home, though now it is under the gloom of clouds.

It is a brilliant pen, indeed, which can describe the joyous meeting of true friends long since parted. I have tried it a thousand times with as many failures. To me it is an undiscovered pleasure. I give it up with regret, for truly I would fain be saying pleasant things of Otto. Maybe I have failed in this because of the absense of his soul in his face, the presence of which we were only

made aware of by the prolonged pressure of the faithful hand.

The first greeting over, our horses fed, the sleet shaken from our overcoats, and our frozen hats hung in the hallway, we were moving with gleeful feet to the sitting room, where an open fireplace lay smiling under the fervent glow of a country fire, when Otto laid his hand lightly on my shoulder and said, "Softy, she is dying!" "Who?" we asked with respectful accents; but there was no answer. Otto had gone—whither, we knew not. The servant showed us into the sitting room, where intuitively we moved upon our toes, and held our benumbed fingers to the cheerful blaze.

The night grew colder; the hands of the clock trembled on the hour of twelve, and still we sat anxiously awaiting Otto. Presently he came, with traces of unutterable woe in his features. His mind was ill at ease. He staggered under the awful burden, and fell upon Legrange's shoulder, crying aloud, "She is gone, gone, gone!" Thus he wept until a late hour; then fell asleep, overcome at last, by the long and incessant watchfulness over the object of his affections.

Legrange watched over him, while I, with the servant, sat watching in the silent chamber. Then, for the first time, the servant told me the tragic story of two hearts for one.

Said he: It is as old as the everlasting hills, as common as the sunbeams, and a thousand years hence the theme of it will be as fascinating as was Eve when Adam first beheld her, notwithstanding the dullness of my own narration. But you will not divulge it? Your silence assures me and I proceed.

It was evening, and the red star followed in the wake

of the new moon, as it went gliding along the horizon to the close of its luminous way. In the distance the watch-dog baying deep-mouthed bade adieu to the day. Ever and anon the huntsman's clarion horn called his comrades to the chase. The red fox heard the sound, and, leaping from the farmer's pig-sty, licked its mouth, shook its tail and struck a running trot across the moorland to the hills beyond.

Peggy, the milk-maid, came along the lane, singing one of those love ditties common to girls of seventeen summers. Joe, her brother, was feeding the horses; and the hired man came plodding along from his labors, whistling an air that marked the vacant mind. When suddenly there came along the high road two persons on horseback; one was well formed, lovely and beautiful; her face was livid with the excitement of the chase; the other was tall, manly and brave, what you might call handsome. He seemed moved by some awful emotion, the anxiety of his soul stood out upon his features, and his voice trembled slightly when he threw the reins to the hired man and asked, "Is Parson Dale at home?"

Need I tell you theirs was the same old story?

The old man came hurriedly to the rescue; Joe and the hired man held the horses, Peggy lighted and held a torch, while the reverend father read the nuptials under the stately elms by the gate.

Down the lane another sound of horses' feet came thundering along, as if it had been the rushing of many steeds to battle. It came nearer, nearer, nearer and still more near, till our hearts stood still, awed by the awful expectancy on Otto's visage.

You may never have seen Cupid in such perils, and I hope you never will. For just as the preacher uttered

those magic words, "They whom God has joined together, let no man cast asunder," the enraged father rode up, dismounted, and with oaths which seemed like distant thunder, drew a dirk from his bosom, and with the dexterity of a skilled fencer, sprang toward the bridegroom.

Oh, the impending stroke! and Otto's look of despair! They haunt me to this day. I turned aside to screen my eyes from the bloody deed, when a wild, piercing, frenzied wail cried out, "Spare my husband!" and, looking up, I saw the young and unhappy wife spring between father and lover just as the fatal stroke was falling. She reeled backward, threw up her hands and fell senseless in the arms of the bridegroom. She saved her husband at the peril of her life.

The old man cast one wild, guilty, remorseful look on all, remounted his steed and rode slowly away.

Kind hands bore the young woman into the house, undressed her and found the knife lodged in the steels of her corset. Her person was untouched.

The twilight had fallen, but the firmament stood dazzling in the grandeur of its universal sweep; the wind had lulled itself into repose, and the night was as silent as the hush of the Pyramids. Nature slept. In the distance the farm cock stretched its neck, flapped its wings and crowed till the stillness was broken. Then off toward the north the clarion horn, whoop of huntsmen, yelp of hounds and the clatter of horses' feet remind you that the red fox has not yet escaped its foe; but it leads them a merry chase, over hillside, field and fallow, through the underbrush, into the woods beyond. Here the dogs come to a full stop and the night is made hideous with their baying.

The hunters gather around on their horses and be-

hold a bridleless horse, and near by an old man swinging from a tree at the ends of his bridle reins. His hands are grasping the reins over his head, his eyes are protruding and staring, his tongue is swollen and lolled, and speech is dead. The limb of the tree swings down, till the great toes of the dying man grapple with the earth. He is in the agonies of death. To release him is but the work of a moment; a strong arm reaches out and draws a knife across the noose, and the man falls limp and cold. Such was the fate of Shearod Gay, the father of Otto's wife.

Nothing could shake off this scene. She grew sick, and would not be revived. She accused herself of her father's death, as he, doubtless, did himself of hers.

After visiting all the health resorts of this country and Europe, Otto returned with her a fortnight since; and there she lies the victim of that fascinating passion known as love.

MARY JANE'S BRIGHT EYE.

OFt in the hush of twilight,
When the golden sunbeams die,
There beams for me the light
Of Mary Jane's bright eye:
As she swings,
And sings,
And lingers late,
For me at the cottage gate.

Whenever the day goes wrong
With the weight of cruel cares,
The lustre of her orbs
Beam brighter though in tears,
As she weeps
And sweeps,
And watches late
My coming through the cottage gate.

Oh! the eyes of my Mary Jane!
Dark and sparkling, lovely eyes,
Where stood my reflected self
Mirrored in paradise,
As she hung,
And swung,
And lingered late,
And kissed me o'er the cottage gate.

SONNETS TO MY LOVE.

I

I STOOD, when life was full of buoyant hope,
At sunrise, in the vanished years now flown,
With my mother, on that piece of earth that's
known

To those who've had mother's affections ope
The gate, and leave ajar, to their full scope,
The delightful ways of sweet childhood's home,
And felt her hand of blessing on her own—
And now when fancy calls up those remote
Times, though its far too late, I appreciate
Her sole absorbing theme, maternal love;
Alone on this, the greatest human trait.
God has written in the archives above
Divine; but she left me disconsolate.
Alone in oblivion's sphere to move.

II

I turn away from this scene of sadness,
To embrace thee, fairest of all the earth.
Thou thrillst me and all my friends with mirth
And incitest hope that counsels cheerfulness,
And bidst me to no longer doubt; nor guess
At the supremacy of thyself and worth,
Nor longer to compare thee with the serf;
Life's meaner beings and their littleness.
Thou art celestial, fair sweetheart of mine,
Divinely fashioned in thine every part,
The light that dazzles in those eyes of thine,

Has won until now my unconquered heart;
I kneel, divested of self, at love's shrine
And offer thee all my confiding heart.

III

It is thine for good, for better, or for worse,
Faithful to remain through all the year
Of checkered life's bright sunshine, cloud and tear,
Thine whatever be thy sad reverse,
Thine till the collapse of the universe;
Thine to revere, to love, adore, to wear
Thine image on my soul; nor fate, nor fear,
Weal nor woe, nor Mammon's power coerce
Me into cold forgetfulness of thee,
Because thou still livest alone for me
And stern, cold, destructive adversity,
Has left thee goddess of prosperity,
To inspire me. Today, o'er life's grim sea.
I hear the glad acclaim of victory.

IV

It's sweet to hear the milkmaid's rural song
Floating in its melody on the wind;
The buoyant echo of a tranquil mind;
And sweeter still to see the waving corn,
Falling beneath the scythe throughout the long
Harvest days; and yet still more so to find
The frugal meal spread by the angel kind,
Which God gave to be our helpmate. The horn
Of plenty thrives in her delicate hand,
And economy fills our humble board.
It is sweet as you tread a foreign strand,
Where the ships from over the sea stand moored;

To learn anew that in your native land,
 Confiding lovers your memories hoard.

V

It is sweet to have narrated at night
 The travels of him who has seen the earth,
 When hoary winter makes of all a dearth,
 And the fires of peace in our homes burn bright
 As we mix our wines and our friendships plight,
 O'er the bright nectar that kindles the mirth.
 Of the jolly souls that surround our hearth
 With their witty convivial delight.
 But sweeter, sweeter far, than all of these,
 Are the delicious joys young lovers steal.
 While making love beneath the verdant trees,
 As they feel the full, wild, passionate weal
 Of first love's grand emotions: when the breeze
 Of mutual hope fans the fire they feel.

VI

But this to me is the sweetest by night,
 With my love's soft voice as the complement,
 Chiming the cadence of its merriment,
 While her heart's at ease, and her spirit bright,
 Allures the soul in its ecstatic flight,
 To the fullest extent of its sentient,
 Passionately, bewildered sentiment,
 Of love's profound, affectionate delight.
 To feel the touch of this angelic one,
 In the sublime grace of her fellowship;
 Makes the heart beat quick and the spirit run,
 Pregnant with great bliss, into Cupid's ship
 O'er oceans of doubt, to love's dominion,
 As on her upturned face I press my lip.

VII

And when under the weight of cares for me,
In affection's bower thou seekst repose,
I will gather the myrtle, lilly and rose,
To embellish thy resting place for thee.
For chastity's reclining couch should be
A sacred shrine, where the gallant daily goes,
A self-made vassal, chief of love's heroes
Felling the vicious tongue of calumny.
When all the means at my command are spent,
Whereof I might make thy sleep softly flow
Through sunny dreams, I'll cease to serve, and print
A kiss, love's epilogue, on thy sweet brow,
Explanatory of our merriment,
And resign thee to slumbers light and low.

VIII

Again the long and sombre shadows throw
Their spectre forms across the dreary road;
And their grim quiverings plainly forebode
A crisis, and the golden sun, although
Fading, has still a rich and brilliant glow,
And his brow of burnished gold throws a robe
Of crimson o'er all; as the grim old ford
Between the night and the day he leaps o'er.
When tired day slowly succumbs to twilight,
Whose silent curtain, dropping, hides the way
From view, and we see cold, dark, gloomy night
In triumph succeed the beautiful day,
Until the moon and stars, illumed and bright,
Have martialled themselves in the Milky Way.

IX

Now the beauties of the sun's after glow

Are reflected in yon dazzling arcade,
 As legions of stars after stars promenade
 Down the aisles of the firmament, and throw
 The glory of their unique order o'er
 All; there each in its special orbit stayed,
 By the rules of harmony which pervade
 The universe, has beings of its own,
 Who looking off on this world of ours, call
 It, perchance, a star, as on in its way
 It goes around the Prince of day, a ball
 Of ordinate matter, till ev'ry ray
 Of the spheres roll in files astronomical,
 While in the east the laughing sunbeams play.

X

Sleep, thou art a workman of skill and art,
 The master builder that turneth the arch
 Of beauty in feminine form; monarch
 Of nature's stupendous being and heart,
 That fills creation to its utmost part,
 With energy for its triumphant march,
 O'er the blighting forces of death that parch
 The soul of beauty: aye, the stricken heart
 Beats stronger after calm repose with thee,
 And death is foiled in its triumphant hour,
 And marks but a point in our destiny,
 Where the watch fires burn dimly in life's tower
 But will blaze with renewed vitality,
 Reignited by thy silent power.

XI

For what is death but calm repose after all?
 Sleep, lovely sleep, that finds vitality;

Behold! it springs from seed of plant and tree,
A living fact, the grave cannot enthrall,
Nor annihilation again recall—

Demonstrated resurrection to me,
Immortal life, man's final destiny;
By nature's vital forces ever called
To action somewhere in the universe,
After the pause for refreshment and rest,
In that realm where the omnivorous nurse
Men call the grave, enfolds all to its breast,
Whose stern immutable powers coerce
And all the living maketh a jest.

XII

Blessed is the man who enters sleep's domain
Of tranquility and majestic ease;
Where refreshing slumbers the weak appease,
And with beauty reanimate the inane;
Where calumny's shaft and intended pain
Are vanished never to return again;
Where society's distinctions release
Their hold, and caste—that civil disease—
Which has destroyed states and wrecked empires,
Is perpetually barred; there the old
Consuming blight of poverty expires,
And of mute inactivity grows cold;
When peaceful repose quiets the desires,
And sleep, majestic sleep, fills the household.

XIII

Come thou, lord of labor, come. I propose
To ally myself with thee, and to have,
Thy powerful hands close these eyes, and pave

My way to forgetfulness and repose;
 Teach me how soon forgot are all the woes.
 The joys, the triumphs; and all that men crave
 Or hope for, love or abhor, when the grave,
 Ante room to eternity, shall close
 All the realities of earth to me.
 Sweet refreshing slumber, come, my royal
 Master, come thou, and let me embrace thee.
 Oh! come thou, and strengthen me for the toil
 Of another day; and of eternity
 Give me a view, ere my ashes have turned to soil.

XIV

Sweet the morning after repose with thee,
 When the firmament turns from gray to gold,
 And the radiant starlit sky has rolled
 Into the archives of day's immensity,
 And thou awake, seeming fresh from Deity's
 Hands come, and we from love's eyes will behold
 The first born of all the spheres arise, bold
 And fearless in his supreme sovereignty
 O'er all aerial things; but to you.
 Last and fairest from the hand of God,
 He comes on golden wings, a servant true,
 Alone illuminating thy abode;
 There he is at last up the eastern view,
 And only for thee creation's beauties hoard.

XV

Sweep on in thine aerial flight, O sun,
 Like shadows old chaos fled before thee.
 When thou swung out there over land and sea,
 The hub of the solar system to run

The universe; then the morning stars sung
Together while thou set the spheres aglee,
And fixed the measures of their destiny
When old time's calendar began to run.
But who can fix the measure of thy years,
Or tell when they shall end, as they surely will,
For 'tis said thyself shall die, and the spheres
Shall forget their concord and instill
In old chaos a new hope; but it appears
It shall not triumph when thou art still.

XVI

Then Jehovah's supremest attribute
Will light the diamond boulevards of the sky,
And angels of peace and light will fly,
On errands of love for thee, and salute
Us with shouts of welcome, which will confute
The fears our carnal bodies raised, led by
The prince of night; that father of the lie
Which once made us hesitate, and commute
The priceless favor of Messiah for him.
But now we see His love in the pathless wood,
In rippling stream, and eolian hymn,
In the embellished lea where Flora stood
And sowed the flowers in the early spring,
And left the spirit of her sisterhood.

XVII

Who is the queen of my fancy? Well,
My friend would you really like to know?
She is not yellow, white nor gray, and so
Must be something else. I'm afraid to tell,
Since all that's mean between heaven and hell,

Abhor the color black. She's cherub, though,
And all the fair and the impartial know,
She is a beautiful, beautiful angel.
I care not what your prejudice, you'll love
Her in your heart, when the light of her dark eyes
Beam on you, like the flash of stars above
A dark and rolling cloud; her form complies
With all the art the Grecian sculptors prove:
"Her voice?" A chord escaped from paradise.

MY WISH.

AS I strive to lift the burden,
When intense becomes the strife,
If you are friendly, brother,
While the tumult is rife,
Is the time above all others,
For the helping hand in life.

And when I am growing weary,
Victory seems in doubt,
Then come to my rescue, brother,
With praises loud speak out,
Do not wait till I have conquered,
To raise the cheering shout.

If the fight is drawn, my brother,
I neither lose nor win,
Will you keep your place beside me,
Till I try it again,
Till I mend my broken armor,
And try my hand again?

If the battle goes against me,
I'm smitten hip and thigh,
It is then and there, my brother,
I'd like to have you nigh,
With your valor and your courage,
And not your sympathy.

And when I'm done, my brother,
When my final word is said,

When I sleep beneath the grasses
 Where the daisy lifts its head,
 In the place of polished marble
 Plant the roses instead.

You may leave me off your praises,
 When they make my humble bed,
 In the silent land of shadows
 With the green sod over head—
 If I am forgot while living,
 Forget me when I'm dead.

Just leave me to the memory
 Of him I used to know,
 Of the friend who stood beside me
 So many years ago,
 When you were quoting calumny
 And I was plucking crow.

THE GLORY OF A HORSE TRADE.

HORSE trading is the most fascinating vocation I know of. If it is not romantic, it is novel in the extreme. By way of illustrating this fact, I desire to give you my experience in this honorable business. The geography of the place where the scene occurred is unnecessary. It is enough to say that you will be entertained. This, however, is mere presumption because it is about horse trading.

It was my first business day, in my new stable in Twenty-third Avenue. Here I had collected as fine a lot of horses, mules, buggies, carriages and other stock of the trade as I have seen south of Kentucky.

I had just gone through the exercise of showing a horse off to the best advantage, when some one announced a gentlemen who wanted to purchase a horse. Upon this the gentleman entered and introduced himself to me as General Bearwell, of the Thirty-third Calvary, U. S. A. I advanced and offered him my hand, saying as I did so, "My name is Roland, sir. I hope you are well?"

"Quite so, I thank you," said he with the familiarity of an old friend.

I looked him through, and thought I knew my man. He was just the fellow for my beautiful black steed with the dark fiery eyes.

"What can I do for you, General?" said I, with my soul in the word General.

He replied, "I wish to purchase a horse."

"Any choice as to color, General?"

"I like black horses, sir."

Up to this point in the game I had been studying the General's temperament, which I found to be nervous. Perceiving him to be a smoker, also, I was prepared to begin the trade in earnest, which I did through the persuasive influence of a pure Havana cigar.

I took my match case from its retreat, drew a match across the scratch, which seemed to ignite itself from its jeweled setting, and handed it to the General. Our cigars lighted, we walked leisurely along between the stalls till we reached the one in which was quartered my beautiful horse. Here I stopped, drew a wisp of smoke, puffed it to the ceiling, and threw the cigar aside. Then I stepped to the noble animal, slapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Here, General, is a horse that will suit you. He is a horse every inch of him! He is swifter than any thing driven in Ben Hur's oriental races; and more docile than old Dagobert's horse of Wandering Jew proclivities."

I had played this trick a thousand times. I wish you could have seen me on this occasion. I was at my best. The General was captivated and asked the price.

"Here, boy, lead this horse to the front," said I, as I lighted another cigar from that magic box, as if I did not hear the General.

That boy was the jewel of a jockey. He knew how to lead a horse. You talk about horse trading! It ought to be enrolled in the galaxy of science as one of the fine arts.

My horses were always young, and of the finest breed. They never passed the age of seven years. Most of them had just dropped their colt's teeth, in the natural way, or by the aid of cold steel. The General examined the teeth of that horse and found them to be

all right. They who buy and sell horses know the value of good teeth to the trade.

Our trade was now fairly on. Having found a horse to suit the General, the next thing was to fit him to a price worthy of him and remunerative to me. This is the objective point in a horse trade. It is not the value of the horse, nor his cost—this has nothing to do with it. It is your customer's standing in society, his taste, his whims and his pride. Put a price on these, and go at him through his emotions. Arouse these and keep them aroused. This is no easy task; but if you are up to date in your business, it is a pleasant duty.

The General wore a beautiful watch charm, under the glass casing of which was a beautiful picture of himself, standing by a beautiful black stallion that was almost the exact counterpart of my own horse. With that charm between my finger and thumb I toyed a moment, with my mind on an immense mirror I keep in my stable, to aid me in fixing fancy prices for fashionable people.

I knew if I could get the General to see himself by my horse in the position he occupied in the picture, all would be well. Nothing surpasses the other fellow's characteristics in a horse trade, if you can enlist them unawares.

At last I said, "General, I should like to see you ride that horse. He is a noble fellow; and, besides, you can best judge of his speed and gaits when once you mount him."

This was a difficult lead; but the General took it like a charm. As he cantered down the street I whispered to that faithful jockey, "The glass." In a few minutes the General returned.

The jockey caught the horse and led him to the proper position, in front of that magnificent mirror. The General dismounted, and, from force of habit, leaned back on the horse's shoulder, with his hand playing with his silken mane. There they stood, as fine a specimen of animated nature as I ever beheld.

Again he asked the price, and, as I had him prepared for it. I put it to him straight, forty eagles in gold! He staggered under this a little, but I kept him on his feet by slapping the horse in the flanks, and saying, "beautiful steed—thoroughbred—I cannot sell him—General, can I show you another horse?"

This little maneuver brought the General around all right. The terms were agreed to and he invited me down to his camp for the money. The horses were soon saddled; and we rode out of my stable chatting like old friends.

I can never forget that afternoon. The General, a thorough horseman, and his prancing steed are indelibly stamped on my mind. The forest trees were decorated in all the splendor of green, orange and vermilion, among which the sunbeams were falling in rivulets of gold. A brisk wind blew in from the south, and lifted the mane of the General's horse in beautiful folds of silk, whose ebony color dazzled as it waved.

I had played my part well. Think of it, four hundred dollars for that horse! He cost me only forty, and he was fifteen years old if a day. Dr. Leonard, the dentist, had made him a beautiful set of ivory teeth, whose artistic finish seemed to reproduce nature.

I confess, to use a vulgar phrase, I "played the General for all he was worth." Played for a big stake and—I was about to say—got it. I had an easy time

with him. The only thing in my way was my conscience. I know you will laugh to hear of such a thing in a horse trader, but it is too true; that avenging spirit, or whatever you may call it, kept nagging me under the left arm, and ringing in my ears, "Thou robber!" But, like most of the brethren of the profession, I smothered it at last under the happy expectancy of that four hundred dollars.

During our ride to the camp the General told me of his travels in the far east. He had served as major in the English army, during its Egyptian campaign, up the valley of the Nile. He had hunted tigers in the jungles of the Soudan, looked in upon the faithful during the devotionals of the Koran in Mecca, and traded horses in the city of Bagdad. In response to this remark I bulged my off cheek with my tongue.

We are now in the camp of the General, and the scene changes. Not till death separates me from all things earthly, shall I forget what I am about to impart. No sooner had we reached the camp, than I became the General's guest. He treated me as if I were a prince. He offered me cigars, the delicate flavor of which surpassed my own pure Havanas; and wine, ah me, such wine! its sparkling, oily smoothness verified an age, the remoteness of which I cannot imagine. I confess I tipped my glass and drank to the General's health. Who would refuse a glass of wine and lose the sweet sensations of a triumphant horse trade?

During the drinks, the General kept spinning yarns about his visit to Bagdad, until a little old man came in and handed him a note. This fellow the General introduced to me as his friend and cook. The cook bowed a genteel salute, and retired. Then the General offered

me twelve ten dollar bills, saying as he did so, "This, my friend, is all I can give you for your steed, my cook says it is all he is worth." Do not ask me to describe my surprise, for I cannot. I lost my temper. As we were growing into hot words, the bugle called to drills, and the General retired.

Presently the cook came in, wearing a blank smile, and said: "My master says he owes you money, will you please accept it and depart? The camp is closed to visitors." Upon which he, too, counted to me twelve of the prettiest ten-dollar bills I remember having seen. I confess this was a degree of the profession of which I was ignorant. However, I did the best I could. I examined the money and found it to be counterfeit, pure and simple. I threw it in the face of that cook; and began to beat him unmercifully. The guards heard his cries, and, rushing in, hurried us off to the marshal of the watch; who demanded of us why we had disturbed the peace of the camp!

I spoke in my own defense, and told him all about my trade and the deception of the General and his cook, emphasizing the offer of counterfeit money with such persuasive eloquence as to carry the marshal with me. So much so that he expressed a desire to punish the offenders; unless they had some extenuating circumstance to offer.

Then he turned to that consummate scoundrel, the cook, and addressed him in these words: "My good fellow, what can you say for yourself?"

He bowed his head to the earth in real Oriental fashion, and said, "Much, your honor, much! This stranger sold my master a horse for four hundred dollars in gold, which I have paid him as directed. Instead of depart-

ing with his money, as he should have done, he violently assailed me in our tent, and accuses me falsely before your honor."

Again the marshal turned to me for a reply, which I hastened to give. Confident of vanishing my enemy, the cook. I turned out my inner pockets to verify my innocence. Imagine my unutterable horror, to see forty eagles in gold, rolling therefrom. I hung my head to hide my shame, with my heart boiling with rage. I stood there irresolute and confused, and the cook triumphantly chuckled.

Then the marshal, addressing the cook, said, "Have you anything further to say?"

To which he answered, "This man seems to be ignorant of the glories of a horse trade. Since he displays so much ignorance, let him return my master's gold, take his horses and leave the camp."

"Be it so," said the marshal.

Mounted on the horse I rode to the camp, and leading the one I was to have sold the General, I made my way home, crest fallen and sad. Some days later I received four hundred dollars in gold from the General, and the following letter:

Valley Camp 33 Cavalry U. S. A., Sept. 15, 18—
Mr. Roland, City Stables

Dear Sir—A few days ago my cook and you had some little misunderstanding about a horse trade. I regret it very much. You will please find inclosed the price of the horse you sold me. The conscientious respect I have for the glory of a horse trade prompts me to send you the gold. You ought to have kept the money instead of taking away my Arabian stallion without my consent. Thinking that you mistook my horse for yours I give you the opportunity of returning im; if you prefer to swap horses, you may return the gold and keep him; but in no case are you to keep both. I hope you will accept my apology for the behavior of my cook: I know you will when

you learn why he acted as he did. He and the marshal had made a bet that you did not know one horse from another, and yet had sense enough to hoodwink me. By this time I presume you are aware of the truth of this statement.

You forgot to tell me your horse had false teeth, a fact I learned today while on parade; for then my, or rather your horse's teeth fell from his mouth, much to my displeasure. I nearly forgot to tell you that my old stallion lost his eyes during one of the battles of our Egyptian campaign. While I was in Paris an oculist made him those beautiful dark eyes.

I have no doubt that the noise of the camp disturbed you as you rode away the other day; please accept my apology for the boys; they were applauding my cook on his good judgment. He, by the way, is an East India juggler of rare skill.

Hoping that you will accept this explanation in good grace, I appreciate the honor of subscribing myself,

Yours truly,

General Bearwell.

I dropped the letter and ran to the stall of my favorite steed; he was not there, but another one instead, in whose dark eye gleamed all the fire of the Arabian horse which, upon examination, I found to be artificial indeed.

It was now my turn in the game. I had the General's money and a horse in many respects better than my forty dollar one.

But the gold! the gold! Its mellow clink fell upon my ears so seductively that my heart stood still and my soul hesitated between forty eagles and a blind horse. Then my conscience returned to its old place under my left arm and whispered "honor;" and, remembering the General, by his acts, placed me squarely on the glory of a horse trade, I returned the gold.

I CARE NOT FOR THE MISER'S GOLD.

I CARE not for the miser's gold,
Nor increased acreage of lands;
My neighbor's goods I would not hold
Nor wring wealth from his clinched hands.
Oh no! My God! I would not have
My hands itching for his gold,
A higher boon my spirit craves
Of Thee. Let me communion hold
With these: the good, the great, the free;
Aye! let me scale the towering dome
Of thought, and feel, and know, and see
The highest dome bidding welcome
To my continued upward flight;
Oh, grant that I may stand amid
Men of thought. a man; banish night
From my clouded brow, and me rid
Of my mental infirmities.
Thou Deity of Deities!

CASTLE BUILDERS.

MANY and many a merry day,
 Under the oak tree's shade,
 We children tripped it out to play,
 Happy, blithe and gay:
 Then we built our airy castles high,
 To occupy—ah when?
 When we were grown to men,
 Those beautiful, airy castles high,
 When we were grown to men.

Or down the lane we chased the fly,
 That brilliant, gauzy thing,
 Which seemed a sunbeam floating by,
 Blithe and gay as we,
 When we built those airy castles high,
 To occupy—ah when?
 When we were grown to men,
 Those beautiful, airy castles high,
 When we were grown to men.

Alas! the golden years have flown;
 Also the blithe and gay;
 But hope's phantoms flit the gloam
 Just the same today;
 And we build our airy castles high,
 To occupy them when
 We unite the schemes of men—
 You beautiful, airy castles high,
 We'll occupy you then.

And soar again on fancy's wings,
Chasing the rainbows down;
Those radiant and dazzling things,
The visionary schemes of men;
And build our castles somewhat worse,
Than in the years gone by;
For we shall occupy them when
We learn to know man is a farce,
And his promise is a lie.



THE PYRAMID.

THE pyramid through ages past,
Through all their tempest, storm and blast,
Held its apex up to grasp
The elements.

Three thousand years, long and fleet,
Have struck their colors at its feet,
Ten thousand more its strength shall meet
Till time is done.

Where is the tower Babel built?
Where is Tyre's crimson hilt?
Judea's temple, and the guilt
Her neighbors' knew?

They're gone at oblivion's call—
Old Egypt's skill survives them all—
Yet in the art of Pharach's pall
The Egyptian lives.

JOE'S FARM.

MANY and many a year has gone
Since I was cleared by Joe,
Who plowed me up and planted corn,
To see it shoot and grow.

He built an old Virginia fence
Out there where the wires run;
And worked, he said, in self-defense,
From sunny sun to sun.

He planted peas between the rows,
And pumpkins here and there;
And where that patch of briar grows
He set out deep the pear.

And further on the apple tree,
And the peach orchard there;
With worthy pride embellished me
With fruit trees ev'rywhere.

And placed around the orchard, sir,
Were hives and hives of bees;
In the piggery the hogs were;
In the pasture, the beeves.

And fiery steeds, and all that go
To make your farm a home;
But that which was most prized by Joe
Was his broad-fertile loam.

He kept me fertilized and tiled,
With ditches deep and wide,
And never let the floods run wild,
Nor stream it down my side.
And where the gullies would have been,
Near by he planted trees;
Then there the grass grew bright and green,
And there would play the breeze.
But Joe has long since passed away,
And others master here;
Yet since that sad and gloomy day
I've lordless been and drear.
And where was once the verdant knoll,
Gullies are yawning wide;
And when it rains the waters roll
In torrents down my side.
Here in the flats the briars grow,
The thistles on the hills;
And where the gin wheels used to go
Are a few rotten sills.
The gentleman that's master now
Says farming does not pay;
He neither drives nor holds the plow,
And values not his clay.
When the master of this place was Joe
And cotton king of crops,
I've seen the white and red blooms blow
On miles of my sunny tops.
And in the fall the fleecy stuff
Would fill the earth like snow,
The harvesters would cry enough,
And farming it paid Joe.

AFTER CHURCH.

YES, May and I are friends,
Lovers, many have said;
For down the lane and o'er the lea
To church we often tread,
In that careless sort of way.
That leads to love, they say;
And after church we often search
For garlands by the way.

Yes, May and I are friends,
And something more, they say;
Because along the curved strand,
Where we sat the other day,
I simply wrote her name,
And wrote it o'er again;
When after church we stopped to search
For shells along the main.

More than friends are we,
My bonny May and I;
At least that's what our neighbors say
Whene'er they pass us by,
They smile and wink their eye,
And set their necks awry:
When after church we stop to search
For heart's ease, May and I.

WORDS.

WORDS are but leaves to the tree of
mind;
Where breezy fancy plays;
Or echoes from the souls which find
Expression's subtle ways.

A beaming lamp to idea's feet
Where sentinel thought abides;
Or a guide to the soul's retreat,
Where master man presides.

A jewel trembling on the tongue,
The index of the heart;
The black mask from the spirit wrung.
Revealing every part.

A ship upon the sea of life,
With all her sails aswell;
Her cargo being the bread of life,
Or the cindered dross of hell.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

LIFE is a mysterious thing.
 It comes we know not whence,
 And leaves us on a rapid wing
 For an absence immense.

Just yester morn I had a friend,
 Cheerful, brilliant and gay;
 Today grim Death announced his end,
 And bore him hence away.

Away into that dark region,
 From kindred, friend and foe,
 To join the numberless legion
 Of men who went before.

Who, now, will cheer the broken hearted,
 Or shield them from Death's wrath.
 Since the strong, the brave, has departed,
 And left a corpse in the path?

He was adorned with honor's star,
 Had conquered all but fate;
 Death's wing became his palace car
 And bore him to heaven's gate.

Sleep on, dear friend; thou art not dead;
 Much labor bids thee rest
 Profoundly in thy narrow bed,
 Of mother earth the guest.

The good, the great in eminence,
The famous, and the proud,
Shall join thee, shorn of this pretense,
Clothed only with a shroud.

Ambition, pride and hope may rise
Towering up Fame's dazzling peaks;
Yet they but find in glory's skies
The bier where valor sleeps.

BLUE CORNER.

DEAR READER: If you ever visit Mississippi, do not, I beg you, leave it till you have seen Blue Corner. It is so superb in its hospitality, so seductive in its amusements, so varied in its appearance, and so unique in its general make-up that I want you to see it.

I blush at the poverty of my vocabulary, since it contains no descriptive word for the fascinating pleasures of Blue Corner. The want of this single word moves me to the agreeable labor of describing this place in a few hundred pages of broken remarks.

I was born in Glen Cove, an unassuming hamlet situated in a remote corner of Mississippi. I remained in this place till my twenty-third birthday; and there I might have stayed until my humble life found its terminus under the sere and yellow leaf, had it not been for a wandering book agent, Robert Roller by name, who came to our home about the middle of April, A. D. 1890, and made it his headquarters, while he canvassed the country for miles around, with a book called "The Annals of Bluster City." Like most of his fellow tradesmen he had a wonderful vocabulary, and the continual flow of his words reminded me of the energy that marks the discourse of the new woman: there was no end to it.

I could offer no resistance to his rounded periods: and so, of evenings, when he returned from his labors, I

sat riveted to my seat, while he painted, as only a book agent can, the beauties of "The Annals of Bluster City."

From these learned recitals I escaped only when he fell asleep over his labors. He followed me, however, in his slumbers, with such a dogged determination that the toil of his dreams fatigued him, and he arose from his couch haggard and worn. At last his labors were ended, and he was about to take his leave of us forever, when he called me aside and gave me a little confidential information.

Said he, "Bluster City proper lies about seventy miles from this place. If you desire to visit it, follow this direction: keep to the main county road, which leads off to the northwest through a stretch of fifty miles of primeval pine forest, in which the lumberman's axe has never, or rarely, fallen to break the grandeur of its solitude; by Williamsburg, Mount Carmel, Westville, Harrisville, Steens Creek, Pearson Station and on to the River of Pearls: on the right bank of which stands Bluster City. A complete history of this delightful place is contained in its annals, with the exception of a single chapter which contains the after thought of its author, written some years before the publication of the last edition, as a kind of appendix. This chapter is known as Blue Corner. When you visit the city do not forget to see it."

Dear reader, you will not marvel if I tell you "The Annals of Bluster City" destroyed my peace of mind. I read the first edition through to the last chapter: and there found written with a bold hand, "Continued in Blue Corner." This book is full of thrilling narratives of love, hatred, revenge and death: among which occasional descriptions of lynching bees are

thrown, to make it easy reading: these of course are in the grand passages of the book, of which I am not at liberty to speak. It is enough to say they contain the southern idea of greatness, and the supremacy of a superior mind.

Since it is useless to reach out after the unattainable, you will allow me to return to Blue Corner. It is there I found many a painful experience and the subject-matter for the reminiscences of my eventful life: for I was tempted, and, true to the Adam in my nature, fell. That is, I made up my mind to visit Bluster City, and see the sights.

Full of this thought I bundled my little belongings together in a bandana handkerchief; and, while my parents slept, I took what I wanted of their treasures, and departed. The moon in its last quarter poised above the great pine forest, and dropped a flood of silver over its ocean of swaying green: shooting stars were playing about the firmament, and in the distance the baying of the watch dog broke the monotony of the silence: save this, and the beating of my own heart, all were as silent as a city of the dead.

I stood alone in the heart of the south, between two rivals. Robert Roller's Bluster City, and my mother's love. For an hour I stopped in the lonely road, and swung between the two like a pendulum, till Blue Corner cast the die and my fate was struck.

With a firm step, a bold heart and a moist eye I moved off towards the northwest. For three days I journeyed in this direction, until I was within a few miles of the city. Then I stopped by the wayside, to rest under an elm tree, and fell in a refreshing slumber: and of course I dreamed a dream. For, you will remember, the

family of Jacobs have not a monopoly of this business; and if I did not see a ladder with ascending and descending angels, and the sun, moon and stars at my feet. I saw a great cathedral, in which men, women and children had gathered themselves in thanksgiving, because of their victory over Bacchus and the capture of the wild beast that had drawn his chariot. In and around the cathedral were the chiming of bells, the carols of joy, the prattle of children, the loveliness of women, the roll of music and orations by the great men of the city.

During this jubilee, some mischief making boys wandered off to the museum, where the wild beast was caged, and amused themselves with pulling its tail; which had the peculiar effect of making it shed large and copious tears. These tears were caught in a flagon and, because of their delicious taste, were in great demand among the boys; so they pulled its tail the more, some of them holding the flagon to its eyes the while, and the more eager the operation of the boys, the more abundant was the flow of the beast's tears, during which it became perfectly blind. and oblivious of all around it; because of which peculiarity they called it a "blind tiger."

Anxious to taste the delicious beverage, I made a rush for the flagon, grasped it, and was lifting it to my lips in triumph, when it turned to ashes; and I awoke. Thus ended one of my fantastic dreams of Blue Corner.

I arose from my rude couch, swung my bandana bundle across my shoulder, and struck out at a brisk walk toward the city, which I reached about four o'clock in the afternoon of May 19, A. D. 1890.

There was nothing specially attractive about this afternoon, though the scenery had changed wonderfully.

Instead of the huge pine trees, with their long trunks reaching up and bracing their universal green against the sky; and hills that bulged up like pyramids, leaving but a span between them for valleys; there was the undulating landscape, with its cultured fields, neat little cottages nestling in the lap of blooming orchards, where the laughter of children, the hum of bees, blooming flowers, murmuring rills and the ploughman's occasional "haw" gave nature a pleasing aspect.

The road broadened and grew into a wide, well graded and commodious pike, where the multitudes go continually. Here another pedestrian came into the high road, from an opposite direction: and as he was of agreeable manners, we walked along together.

After the usual salutation he asked whence I came. I pointed off toward the southeast, with that care worn expression in gesture and face that told of the roughness of the road over which I had come. "Ah yes!" said he, "I remember that hilly country: there the road is a mere path, winding in and out and around immense forest trees, over steep and abrupt boulders, and deep ravines, where the shade of the hills obscures the light of the sun. A rough road indeed, but I dare say you found it more agreeable the further you came toward the northwest?"

I smiled, nodded my approval of his remarks, and grasped him by the hand. He held me fraternally by the hand a moment, looked me full in the face and said, "But do you not think you would have found a more agreeable terminus if you had gone the other way?" I smiled, and said I thought the pike an ideal road, of which no one could justly complain. At this he shook

his head, and said, "Young man, beware of that thoroughfare where the road is broad and the way wide."

The crowd grew denser and we lost each other in its pressure. We never met again. I was caught with the multitude and hurried into the city. I found an inn and took lodging for the night. I went to my room early and lay down to rest, but I could not sleep; the novelty of the situation, the remarks of my stranger friend and thoughts of mother kept me awake. Then I remembered; for the first time in my life I had lain down without saying my prayers. I arose and tried to pray one of those elegant prayers which Deacon Doowell prayed at our last camp meeting; but I failed utterly. There was a great lump in my throat, and little liquid beads in the corners of my eyes. Then I buried my face in my hands and murmured the old one mother taught me before I heard of Blue Corner. You may know it. It is so simple.

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

After this I fell into a profound slumber, from which I was awakened about ten o'clock the next day.

* * * * *

After breakfast I walked out to see the city. I had not gone far before, to my infinite pleasure, I met Robert Roller, the book agent. I told him I had come to see Blue Corner, and would thank him to inform me how I could best do it.

This valuable information given, he advised me to dress myself in suitable apparel, and to meet him on the grand Avenue of Pearls the next day. I then gave him

fifty dollars and requested him to purchase such clothing as he thought I needed.

He went for the apparel and I returned to my room. In due time he came back with a black cloth suit, a pair of shoes, a plug hat and some handsome neckware. The shoes were about two sizes too large, the hat was rather small, the trousers, by letting out my suspenders, reached to the tops of my shoes and stuck to my legs like a prize fighter's tights, the coat was large enough, but the sleeves were far too short. Roller, however, convinced me of the neatness of my appearance, and a further description of my costume is unnecessary.

The next day, dressed in my new suit, I made my appearance on the grand Avenue of Pearls, at the time and place appointed. I found Roller's place of business with ease. It proved to be a combination of barber-shop fixtures, guitars, mandolins, brass horns and other things which our gentlemen of leisure keep about them. We sat in the shop and talked of every thing in general and nothing specially, until I told him of my dream of the flagon, at which he laughed heartily and took me up a flight of winding stairs, into a magnificent room, with frescoed walls, carved furniture and beautiful mirrors. In one of the walls of this room there was a large cylinder shaped thing with little grooves chiseled in it, and near by a cord, attached to a bell (I supposed).

Roller said, "Pull the cord; drop a dollar in the groove, and say number six." All of which I did, and the thing revolved.

Imagine my surprise to find the identical flagon of my dreams, full of the delicious liquid, fresh from the eyes of the tiger, and seventy-five cents in change. Marvel not that the thing wept liquids and change, for

stranger things than this occur daily in Blue Corner. Is it necessary to say that we quenched our thirst?

Then a thing Roller called an elevator, but which I knew to be a trap door, let us down. We returned to the shop and renewed our conversation. About this time some fine looking fellows, the elite of the city, came along, wearing long sack coats that struck them below the knees of their pantaloons, and breeches that reminded me of Aunt Peggy's petticoats. They also wore plug hats and gold-rimmed spectacles, and carried with them melodious stringed instruments. One of them jumped into the chair and said, "Come, Robert, old boy, give me a shave," which my friend did reluctantly. After the shave the fellow said, "Charge that, old boy," and strolled after his companions into an ante room belonging to the shop. I sat there for a long time, talking to my friend Roller, and watching that ante room, into and out of which these gentlemen of leisure were dropping, like flies around a molasses pitcher.

After a while my friend said, "George, old boy, how would you like to go back and see the boys?" Curious to see what could be going on in that room, I consented to go, and in company with my friend, I walked back to that little den of—, well, I will not describe the place.

Here we found several well dressed and gentlemanly looking fellows, seated, somewhat like the Turk at meals, around a large green cloth spread out on the floor. They had also five or six white and cubically shaped blocks, with little black spots on them, which they would shake in their hands and throw out on this cloth alternately, and exclaim, as they did so, "Ah, come seven or eleven!" as if their lives depended on the throw of those little cubes.

Nothing seemed easier than the throw of those cubes and so I remarked as I watched the progress of the game. Then one of the gentlemen asked me to join them in the innocent amusement, which I did, just to while away the time. Another one of them offered to bet me that I could not make a pass in a month. I accepted the challenge; and after I had been instructed in the intricate meshes of the "pass," by my friend Roller, the wager was struck and I started out after that difficult "pass." I shook the cubes and threw them; threw them and shook them, till I forgot myself and was saying with the rest, "Ah, come seven or eleven!" But they never came. The money on the green cloth grew larger; and the bulge in my pocket book grew smaller, passed the danger line and glided down to the void with a vengeance.

Still I shook those accursed cubes, until large drops of perspiration stood out on my forehead cold and dazzling like water dripping from a ball of ice under a burning sun.

I shook those cubes again, deceptive cubes, to throw them for the pass. The bets ran high. "A dollar, five, ten, twenty, thirty, fifty dollars that you do not make the pass!" exclaimed many voices together, as I leaned over on one hand and my knees, with the other hand above my head poised for the pass, repeating as I did so, "Oh, come seven or eleven!"

This is a fascinating if not an innocent pleasure: so much so that no one notes the time, and little bits of cash that pass between his fingers while engaged in it. The time I might have spent and the money lost at it would have been immense had it not been for two gentlemen of the city who came into our presence unexpect-

edly and unannounced. As well as I can remember they were above the average size, dressed in navy blue suits, with brass buttons dazzling down the front of their coats. They carried revolvers and heavy clubs, and wore a visage that would have awed Satan himself. And yet, withal, they were models of politeness. They declared the game off, to my infinite pleasure; for every fabric of my nervous system was in a state of rebellion, and my conscience, well, my conscience—since I come to think of it—for the time being I had none. After this they escorted us up the main streets of the city to a large palatial building with four fronts. This is a magnificent building, with high ceilings, decorated walls and carpeted floors: an ideal place for the throwing of those little cubes. They led us on and on, up winding stairs, into a large spacious room, which one of our guides kindly informed me was the judgment hall; whereupon I asked him if the game would be decided here: for you will remember they held the stakes from the time we left the ante room of Roller's shop.

Arrived at the judgment hall, we were examined as to the state of the game when our friends in blue arrived. Most of the boys engaged in it pretended that it was in fun, but I, being uninitiated, told the thing as it was, and begged the proprietor of this place to give me another chance, as I was young in the game, and I ought not to be dealt with harshly. He rolled a pair of little piggish eyes at me, and commanded order in court.

Whether from instinct or intelligence I know not, but one learns rapidly in such places, and I, being no exception to the rule, began to understand things: and stood apart awaiting developments, which were not long in materializing. The judge said, "What say you all,

guilty or not guilty?" All answered guilty but me. Then he turned to me and said, "What say you, sir: how do you plead to this charge of gaming?"

"There can be no charge against me, your honor: those fellows would have my money."

"How would they have it?"

"By the throw of those cubes, sir."

"Oh well, you are guilty, too." Whereupon we were asked to pay a small sum into the school fund, and the expense account of the temple of justice. In default of which our friends in blue and brazen buttons were to conduct us further on the inspection of Blue Corner, and the novelty of its inner chamber. I handed over my little contribution, on the advice of one of our escorts, and left our friends in the tender toils of the law, struggling to make the pass.

It seems to me I can hear that peculiar sound, "Ah, come seven or eleven!" ringing in my ears to this day.

I tell you few men can escape the fascination of this peculiar game. I charge all to beware of it, for nothing else so utterly destroys the conscience.

It was sad to see those long sack coats and big-leg pantaloons flopping down to the gambler's haven without a single extenuating circumstance to lull the troubled waters. Roller, the barber, cast one long lingering look at me, with tears in his eyes, as the ponderous gate swung back on its hinges to welcome him to his new quarters. I was overcome by pity and felt for my pocket-book, when suddenly I remembered the proverb, "A fool and his money are soon parted;" then I gave him my tears instead, for I turned aside and wept aloud. Why should I not, after such an innocent experience?

In this plight I was about to leave the court room.

when I felt a heavy hand on my arm and, looking up, beheld Mr. Vasty, the police judge, who said, "This way, young man, I wish to speak with you." He led me back to his desk, and lectured in this manner: "Young man, I believe this is your first visit here. I hope you will make it your last. You ought to have more respect for your parents than this. You know what sacrifices they have made to place you on better terms with good and worthy men, and here you are overtaken at last in a den of thieves. I do not wish to be hard on you. It is painful to me to inflict punishment on any one. It is duty, not desire, that moves me. It is among my vain regrets, that it has fallen to my lot to see so many young men, black and white, daily entangled in the meshes of vice. Vain regrets to me, because I cannot persuade them to stop before it is too late.

"To me, gambling resembles the characteristics of the vampire bat, which spends the day sleeping in the folds of tropical flowers and when evening draws on, flutters down from a wilderness of honey to feast on blood. It circles around its unsuspecting victim and fans him to sleep with the rotary of its perfumed wings; then, during his unconsciousness it sucks away his life blood; and the morrow finds a carcass under the fangs of the treacherous thing. Such is the vice of gambling. With its alluring fascination it fans the conscience of the young and inexperienced into repose, till it steals away their self respect, their manhood, their souls! I am going to suspend this sentence, in so far as it relates to you; to give you a chance to redeem your good name; but if you are brought here again, remember, no mercy will be shown. Go, and let me hear a good report of you." So saying he handed back the

money I had paid him; and I walked out of the court room a wiser, if not a better man.

A few paces brought me to the Avenue of Pearls. I stood in its crowded ways solitary and alone, casting about for a friendly face, in the midst of the sea of humanity which rolled about me like the lashing of the endless waters of the deep; but all was a shoreless waste of ocean, where the stately ships sail onward and the stranded ones go down. Then thoughts of the wilderness, home and mother returned to me. I heard a noise of wings above and looked up; the eternal arch of the heavens deepened, and my fancy caught a glimpse of the haven beyond. Involuntarily I repeated:

“ ‘Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home.”

In the midst of my dejection some one handed me a note. I opened it and read as follows:

Dear George:

Please come over to the jail: I have something of importance to tell you.

Robert Roller.

I walked back to the jail and gave the signal. A short stumpy fellow thrust a head into the entrance. Such a head! It rested on a neck that arched over a roll of fat, its back was parallel with its spine; its forehead protruded; its base bulged out over little bits of ears; its nose had a crook in it; its jaws were very prominent; its lips were very thin and puckered from their pressure; and its eyes were a cold steel gray. A further description is useless, since you know him to be the jailer.

I stammered out a request to see one Robert Roller. He called Roller; and bade me enter. Roller came,

took me aside and told me his secret. He then gave me the keys to his shop, and asked me to wind up his business. We shook hands, and I walked over to the shop and began the important duty of closing out his affairs.

I entered the shop, locked the door behind me, and took an inventory of its contents. Then I opened the note Roller had slipped into my pocket. It directed me to a niche in the wall where I would find a chart or diagram of the place. I found the chart without much trouble and read it over carefully. It contained startling revelations about trap doors, subterranean passages, chambers, wine rooms and vaults.

With that chart in hand I made for the vaults, as directed by Roller. My way led through the wine room, where were stored about forty barrels of different brands of whiskey and wines; presently I came to the vaults, applied the combination and the door stood ajar. There lay before my bewildered gaze millions of bills in denominations of fives, tens and twenties; and a keg of gold. The gold was made by the illicit sale of whisky; and the bills were made otherwise.

During my surprise I heard a voice say, "Hurry, friend, or we shall never leave this place alive;" and looking up I beheld the gray eyes of the jailer looking sternly and coldly at me. Then he moved over to my side, slapped me on the shoulder, and said in a whisper, "By jove! you are a jewel." This gave me courage, and with his assistance I loaded the gold and bales of bills on trucks; and trucked them along the passage to a point designated by the jailer's index finger. He touched a spring in the wall and a trap door let me in.

He then told me that in less than an hour the officers

of the law and a detective would raid the place; and that his object was to place those valuables beyond their reach.

He then showed me a wicket in the wall, where I could observe the operations of those who might come, without being myself observed; and another trap door beneath my feet, which would let me out should the officers, by any mischance, locate the one in the wall. To tell the truth, I was trapped and snared everywhere.

The jailer then stepped into the passage, the magic door swung back to its position, and the cavity in the wall was closed. In about an hour I heard the noise of many feet above, the tearing away of fixtures, the moving of furniture and the jests of the officers; and knew that the establishment was being plundered. Presently they entered the passage, led by the jailer, who by the way is a kind of detective himself; and in this case he was detecting the detective. They descended into the subterranean rooms and began investigating the wine room. The officers of the city were hilarious over their success in capturing the greatest illicit whiskey establishment south of Tennessee, and the convivial ones among them made themselves merry by tapping a barrel of old Bourbon. But the detective's face wore a dejected grin and his eyes showed him to be foiled.

They passed along near the trap door that concealed me and I heard the detective say, "I would have bet a million dollars that the counterfeiters were here." The subterranean walls threw back the echo and they passed on. The tension of my nerves lowered, I drew a breath of relief and sat down on the keg of gold to rest, wondering in my simple mind what designs Roller and the jailer

had on me; for it now began to dawn upon me that they were companions in crime.

About eleven o'clock that night the door swung open; and Roller and the jailer entered, bringing with them two large trunks. I feigned sleep; but as a precaution against my waking they held a bottle of chloroform to my nose. I lay there as one dead; but I could hear and see everything that passed. After a while the drug lost its charm, but I slept on. During my nap they destroyed the moulds in which they had manufactured their fortune, packed the bales of counterfeit bills into the trunks, loaded them on the trucks and prepared everything for immediate departure. By this time I was fully awake; but still pretended to be under the influence of the drug. Then they began to discuss me.

Said Roller to the jailer, "More than two cannot keep a secret. What must we do with the simpleton from Glen Cove?"

The jailer whispered something in his ear, and I saw from the iron in their faces that they were meditating my death. Roller drew a rope from his pocket, and began to look at a beam overhead, the jailer reapplied the chloroform, but to no purpose; in the presence of death I could not sleep.

They then made a noose in the rope and placed it about my neck. The jailer, being the stronger of the two, held me up; and Roller began to tie the other end of the rope to the beam; but while they were hanging me, I was hypnotizing them; and they soon began to retrace their steps. When they had untied me, I took the chart, touched the spring in the door, and it swung noiselessly back. I then hurried the trucks and their burden along the passage to its exit, which opened on

the banks of the River of Pearls; here I found a boat and oars. I dumped the money aboard, grasped the oars, and shot down the stream like a spectre. I never heard of Roller or the jailer again, but I suppose they are still pulling away at that blind tiger's tail.

Such is the story of Blue Corner, as told to me by George Rusticham himself.

TO THE DAISY.

NO, the cold damp earth could not restrain thee,
Nor the bleak north winds retard thy coming;
For first on the green where the lambs are running,

And down where the rushing brooklet doth flee,
In its musical cadence on to the sea,

Thy sweet face has been modestly turning
Its delicate features up to the sunning,
And throwing its fragrance over the lea,
In a wild and most exuberant way.

Oh, I love thee, wee blue eyed daisy fair!
And I wish thou might blow out there for aye.

Filled with loveliness, perfuming the air,
And alluring me from the broad highway,
To gather garlands for my lady fair.

Thou sit'st upon the meadow's lap of green,
Like smiles upon the face of a sleeping babe,
And the zephyrs sighing through the everglade,
Waft thy perfumes to the winding stream
That lies at thy feet a beautiful sheen;

By the skill of the Master cunningly made,
To catch the likeness of my dark eyed maid
As she gathers her garlands there, I ween;

Thy Circean beauty bewilders me,
For truly, I am curious to know
Why the most delicate flowers that be,
Upon lawn, heather and bough, should first blow,
Fairest and sweetest in their modesty,
Of all the beautiful flowers that grow.

THE FATE OF ALL.

THEY'LL bring when we are dead, perchance,
Some flowers from their garden, friend;
And place them where Time's cruel lance
Has marked for us, for all, the end.

They'll drop upon our bier a tear,
And close for us our eyes; and then
They will leave us forgotten here,
Till time has run its course with men.

If thought of us survives a day,
A month, a year or century,
Still we shall be forgot for aye;
For time consumes all memory.

If Love should rear her shaft of stone,
To mark our little mound of dust,
The granitic fate too well is known—
It shall decay to mould with us.

A few brief years may yet remain
To us on this delightful shore,
Then in the silent land's domain
We shall rest in peace forevermore.

The generations yet to come,
Creation's vast immensity,
Shall find with us a common home,
For commonage's our destiny.

The vast expanse of all the deep
 Shall one day pause and cease to roll;
 The liquid grave where millions sleep
 Shall itself give up its soul.

When oblivion reigns supreme,
 Down the endless aisles of chaos,
 All things become alike gangrene,
 In the land where spirit leaves us.



TO A JILT.

WHY did you not tell me your heart is stone,
 Where hope, nor joy, nor pleasures abide;
 At whose granite base lies broken my own,
 Shorn of its faith and bereft of its pride?

Yes, I recall, you said something of this,
 But the light of your eye, the smile of your face,
 Led me to confide in the promised bliss
 You taught me to seek of your assumed grace.

And I dreamed not that one with features so fair,
 And a form which truly the angels envy,
 Could weave so well the treacherous snare
 Of vice, and pride, and perjured frenzy.

Fare thee well! Satanic creature, adieu!
 Think no more of him who now tries to wean
 His soul from squandering his all on you—
 Thou false in friendship, in wedlock a fiend!

LINES.

Suggested by the Assaults made on the Negro Soldiers as they passed through the south on their way to and from our war with Spain.

HOW I love my country you have heard,
 And I would you were noble and free
 In spirit and deed, as in word,
 And your boasted humanity.

I love you, my country, I do,—
 Here's a heart, a soul that is thine,
 Pregnant with devotion for you,
 And blind to your faults as to mine.

The standard of morals is high;
 When fixed by my brother for me,
 It goes towering up to the sky
 With a dazzling purity.
 For a bench he sits on a skull.
 And is a judge austere and stern,
 With whom my demurrers are null,
 And my pleadings, though just, are spurned.

I've carried your flag to the front
 Through pestilence, battles and storms;
 Of the carnage of war took the blunt,
 Obeyed your command, "Carry arms!"
 And gone with you down to the death,
 With the thorns of caste on my head;
 Defended your home and your hearth,
 And wept o'er the bier of your dead.

As the smoke of the fight goes by,
 And the bugle calls to repose,
 By my countryman's hands I die,
 As well as by the hands of its foes;
 Yet I love you, my country, I do,
 Here's a heart, a soul that is thine,
 Pregnant with devotion for you,
 And blind to your faults as to mine.



MY LIST OF BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

A LIST of my beautiful things?"
 Well, have you seen my Evylin;
 The beautiful, beautiful Evylin?
 She's my list of beautiful things.

A world of beautiful things is she,
 Grand! chaste! personified
 Love she stands in purity's pride
 And thinks of me, and thinks of me.

Poems of ethical thought is she,
 Divinely sung on every page;
 All her womanly heart engaged
 With love of me, with love of me.

My list of beautiful things,
 None were ever so sublimely grand,
 To her I give my heart and hand,
 And all the wealth my labor brings.

A MESSAGE FOR JANETT.

FAR away where the raging sea goes,
In the islands of the sea.
There our brave and daring heroes
Fought the battles of the free;
From the hands of arrogant Spain
Struck the sword of tyranny.
On the plains of El Caney.

But o'er the halo of our glory
Falls the mem'ry of our brave,
Stalwart men, all maimed and gory,
Sleeping in a foreign grave,
Where the grim Spanish armament.
And her gallant men of war.
Threw death's missiles wide and far.

There among the dead and dying
Lay a victim of their rage,
By a Spanish block house lying.
Amid the battle's carnage.
He yields to death while glory weeps;
But conquers its agony,
And recks not of its misery.

Now his mind on fancy's pinion
Wings its flight to friends and home,
Takes its leave of war's dominion,
Flutters down the vista gloam;
Till again his friends and loved ones

Shout their welcome in his ear,
O'er his comrade's martial cheer.

But his end came nearer, nearer;
Yet he raised his manly head,
And in language somewhat clearer
Called his comrade near, and said,
"Comrade, if you should live it through
Tell them how we met the Don,
Fought for human rights and won;

"Strove to place our standard higher
On the ramparts of the free,
Defied the Spaniard's deadly fire
And died for humanity;
Tell them of our negro heroes,
Of the valiant black brigade,
And the gallant charge it made.

"You remember there's another,
Dearer far than all to me—
Comrade, don't forget my mother,
For she is all expectancy.
Tell her that I met death bravely,
With the red sod for a bed,
And 'Old Glory' over head.

"You will find her by the hearthstone
Near the northern Mexic coast—
Dreaming that I'm coming home,
And the Spaniard's cause is lost.—
'What answer shall you make to her?'
Tell her that she lost a son,
But the day was nobly won.

“Then you’ll take a message for me
 To Janett, across the main:
 There she’s bravely waiting for me,
 But we’ll never meet again
 On that undulating landscape,
 Rolling onward, copse and lea.
 In their rustic purity.

“Where a laughing, rippling streamlet,
 Playing with the golden sands,
 Loiters by the peaceful hamlet,
 Winds along the fallow lands,
 Through a green and varied landscape,
 There Janett awaits for me,
 In a cottage near the sea.

“In a garden, sweetly laden
 With the roses newly blown,
 There the comely, gracious maiden
 Stands before her cottage home;
 Now she moves across the landscape
 Through the copse and o’er the lea.
 See! she comes to welcome me!

“You will know her by her lashes,
 Fringing eyes as dark as jet:
 And her curly raven tresses—
 You can’t miss my fair Janett.
 With her beautiful curved neck,
 And the rare angelic grace
 Of her motion, form and face.”

Here his voice grew faint and broken,
 But his face with rapture shone,

As he held aloft the token
Which he through the fight had borne;
'Twas our old and riven ensign,
That his clotted blood did blur—
This the message sent to her.



MY SUBURBAN GIRL.

I KNOW a sweet suburban girl,
She's witty, bright and brief;
With dimples in her cheeks; and pearl
In rubies set, for teeth.

Beneath her glossy raven hair
There beams the hazel eye,
Bright as the star of evening there
Where the yellow sunbeams die.

Her breath is like a flower blown,
In fragrance and perfume;
Her voice seems from the blissful throne
Where their harps the angels tune.

Her waist is just a trifle more
Than a cubit in its girth;
But when there my arms I throw,
I've all there is of earth.

And when she turns her dimpled cheek
Toward me for a kiss,
I lose expression—cannot speak—
And take all there is of bliss.

THE SOUTHERN GIRL.

THE fairest thing on land or sea
Is the Southern girl, to me.
You should see her when the stars
Come studding all the sky;
And feel her beaming eye
On you when the moon is full—
Fairest of all that's fair is she,
The Southern girl, to me.

You should hear her laugh by night,
In the moonlight clear and bright,
When the zephyrs light and low,
Across the gardens steal.
To play with the Marechal-Neil.
And caress the beautiful girl—
Fairest of all that's fair is she,
The Southern girl, to me.

Beneath the Marechal-Neil by night,
In the hush of the dead twilight,
You should meet the Southern girl;
And hear the angel sing,
The bonny angel sing;
And feast on wit, and joy, and love—
Fairest of all that's fair is she,
The Southern girl, to me.

The vocal enwoven beauty
Of her graces ever cheers me,

As I listen to the cadence
Of her metrical airs,
Whene'er she trills and dares
Some melodious chord to make—
Fairest of all that's fair is she,
The Southern girl, to me.

After the wooing and merry days,
Go with her through her toiling ways,
As mother, and wife, and friend;
Learn the iron will,
The courage and the skill
Of the typical Southern girl—
Fairest of all that's fair is she,
The Southern girl, to me.



ELLA'S DANCE.

COME, tripping, tripping, tripping, oh,
On the light fantastic toe;
And we'll tread the royal measure,
Down the aisles of wit and pleasure,
Gilding softly, sweetly so,
On the nimble, nimble toe.

Come, lightly, lightly, lightly, oh!
Press me softly as we go,
Playfully skipping to and fro,
As round, and round we reel and go,
Gliding softly, sweetly so,
On the nimble, nimble toe.

FLORA.

I SOUGHT her in the woodland
 Where the dogwood blossoms blow,
 And thought I had her cornered
 Where the little rill doth flow,
 Laughs and sings, laughs and sings,
 Sweeping over golden sands,
 Like a living thing
 On burnished silver wings.

But the cunning elf escaped me,
 And left me standing there,
 Bewildered by the cadence
 Of her music in the air;
 In the air, in the air
 The poesy of nature,
 Struck by the feathered tribe,
 Ran lyrical ev'rywhere.

Till fancy caught her smiling
 In the budding of the trees.
 Where tiny little leaflets
 Unfolded to the breeze,
 To the breeze, to the breeze.
 When Flora came a-riding
 A sunbeam for a steed,
 Down the floral highways of the leas.

And the cunning elf flew onward,
 With magical little wand

Painting up the butter cups
Beside her as she ran,
As she ran, as she ran;
Till her prancing steed stood still
Entangled in the snare
On my lady's cheeks of tan.

You cunning little elfin,
I have sought you ev'rywhere
To find you 'neath the tresses
Of a girl's disheveled hair;
Lady fair, graced and rare.
When you stoop to plant the `rose
You but set its colors
In your cheeks, my lady fair.



NANNIE IS A BONNIE MAID.

NANNIE, she is dearer far
Than all the girls I know,
For when the cook deserts her ma
And swears she'll work no more,
She puts her latest music by
And bakes an apple pie.

Nannie is a bonnie maid,
There's none so neat and fair,
As she when dressed in Wesson plaid,
And banged her glossy hair,
With all her silken skirts put by,
While she serves the apple pie.

MY PRAYER.

MY Savior, in life's ebb and flow,
 In its turmoil, in its glow,
 In its triumph, in its woe,
 Through its changes guard Thou me.

I am weak and poor and blind,
 And oft in my weakness I find
 Vile sin has stol'n my peace of mind.
 And driven me, Oh Lord, from Thee.

Eternal One, hide not Thy face,
 But grant me mercy, love and grace,
 And in Thy providence a place
 Of security and rest.

I know Thou art rich without me,
 That one, God, the Spirit and Thee,
 Is th' eternal Deity;
 And angels are Thy worshipers.

In Thy hands love and justice dwell,
 And the hosts of light, earth and hell
 Obedient to Thy will must swell
 The long roll at the judgment call.

Lord, I know when the bleeding heart
 Looks up to Thee, Thou wilt impart
 Upon each ruptured broken part
 The soothing balm of Thy sweet love.

And when estranged are all earth's friends
And the gloom of rejection still tends
To obstruct my way, Thou wilt send
Me Thy comforter from above.

And if fortune at last should beam
Upon my obscure path, a gleam
Of sunshine from Thy upper realm,
I know the sunshine, Lord, is Thine.

Lord, I would learn to love mankind,
Through love of him a passage find
To a rich and bright and purer mind,
And home and rest at last with Thee.

THE ABDUCTION AND RAPE OF THEMIS.

IT was June 27th, 1890, when the abduction of which I am now speaking occurred. On the Monday following this date our court was to have convened in the little town of Popular Swells; and at this session of the court one Roderic Vulcan, with others, were to have been tried for the murder of Thomas Ebon. Ebon was an industrious and well-to-do fellow, who had, in some unaccountable way, incurred the displeasure of some of his neighbors; and, because of this estrangement, was ill at ease; all the more so, because of his ignorance of the offense said to have been committed.

No one would inform him of the cause of the complaint against him; notwithstanding the fact that he made strenuous efforts to discover it, that he might so demean himself as to again possess their good graces.

His efforts were unavailing. The antipathy grew. Men passed him with contracted brows and averted eyes. Women evaded him, and the children hooted at him as he passed them; they even pelted him with stones.

At last the poor fellow awoke one morning to find tacked to his door a large placard, warning him against longer residing in the community; and advising him to leave at once, and to stand not upon the order of his going.

Conscious of his innocence, and believing himself to be in a country whose government was potent enough to protect the property, person and life of its most humble citizen, he complained to those in authority; but

they, under time honored precedents, could do nothing till some overt act had been committed. About three days after the posting of the ominous placard, several of those famous "Unknown persons" came to his home, and began the depredations common to Law and Order Leagues, and White Cappers. They succeeded in applying the torch to his house, and, as he was running from the flames, in killing him; but not until he had mortally wounded two of his assailants, and slightly injured others. Vulcan, the mayor of Popular Swells, was among the wounded.

Incensed, and feeling themselves outraged by an act so dire, the best citizens of the community resolved to have the guilty parties tried in the courts of justice, and the offenders determined that they would not be so ceremoniously dealt with. So they conspired and brought forth this atrocious scheme: The abduction and rape of Themis. The success of their endeavors, the wonder of many, was brought about in this way.

Vulcan, a cunning as well as a villainous man, being but slightly hurt, gathered his friends, Bob Prejudice, Jacob Avarice, Tom Calumny, Joe Hate, Leon Caste, Frank Deceit, Gabriel Pride and Ed. Malice, about him and laid before them his plans. He concluded his patriotic appeal to them with this peroration: "Now, my friends, after thirty years of active service in this way, upon Ebon and his friends, we begin to hear whispers of law, justice, good citizenship, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, as if we had not an inborn right to chastise those whom our fancy singles out as deserving it; that they may be encouraged in their obedience to our will, which, you are aware, is the law of this community. Ours is the wish of superiors

to inferiors, and fate adjures them to obey. This Themis brings a strange doctrine to us, one which will divest us of much pleasure and, if she is adhered to, may give us serious trouble. She, however, is a beautiful being. I am captivated with her lofty mien, her alabaster features and her serene grandeur of poise; yet she must not preside when we are in court as defendants. I leave it to you, my friends, to rid me of this mistress of the law. If any of you, my brethern, have anything of interest to suggest, it is in order now."

Whereupon Caste, Pride, Hate and Malice cried out, "We concur in what your honor has said. We have nothing to add. We will prove our faith by our works."

Then Prejudice arose and said: "I wish to say that I think we shall make no mistake if we edit a newspaper. Through it we can persuade the public to believe in the justice of our cause. Give us a newspaper with my friend Calumny as its editor, and we have nothing to fear. I have faith in the powers and irresistible diplomacy of Calumny. In his hands the beings in the Kingdom of Light are but chalk. You remember with what skillful address he met the son of God in the judgment hall of Pilate. Then what is man, poor, simple, vacillating man, in his hand? If you would seduce the public, and make it subservient to our will, put Calumny in charge of a first-class newspaper. To this end I entreat you."

"It is so ordered. Is there anything further?" said the mayor.

Then Calumny began to address them in the following manner: "If I have had any success in my humble efforts in persuading the public to do its duty, it is because I have always had the untiring and efficient aid of my friend Prejudice. He has ever been faithful and

true to me. In the historic scene he refers to, that sublime tragedy in the hall of Pilate, I remember with pleasure how faithfully he acted his part. He is a logician whose arguments cannot be resisted. No man can reason with him. If he cannot bribe the beings of light, he can so warp their testimony as to (seemingly) make them stultify themselves; and as for those detestable things known as patriots and philanthropists, their greatest deeds of valor, patriotism and courage, and their most sincere acts of kindness and humanity, are painted by him so that they appear as the most atrocious treason. He has an eye for the beautiful. You should see his palace! No language can describe it! A magnificent place! In it there has not fallen a single ray of light since the dawn of civilization. It is the only piece of chaos reason cannot penetrate. If we can but confine this strange goddess, this Themis, in that masterpiece of mechanism, we are absolutely secure. Give me Prejudice as my business manager, and all will be well."

Calumny having finished his remarks, Vulcan said: "My friends, we must, if possible, persuade Themis to abandon her rash course and become one of us. If we fail in this, which is very likely, then our time honored custom shall prevail."

* * * * *

It was now one hour past high noon, June 27th, 1890. Themis, having refreshed herself with milk, honey and dates, had returned to her labors, and was meditating upon the follies of men, and how she could best turn them to their own good, with the least possible injury to themselves.

I think I hear her soliloquizing thus: "What is better for all the people than mutual tolerance and for-

bearance and laws which receive the consent of the governed; laws whereof the memory of man runs not to the contrary; judiciously and impartially administered on all alike?" This, however, may be but an echo from those defunct and cranky old fossils, Kent, Coke and Blackstone; or the errors of my own foolish fancy. I will relate what occurred.

In some mysterious way she called up Socrates, the wise, Romulus and Justinian of Rome; and after addressing them in a tongue unknown to me, she called up others from the silent land, among whom were Alfred the Great of England, Washington, Franklin, Jefferson and Lincoln of America, and addressed them in this manner: "Ah, my good friends, your theory of government, I fear, cannot succeed. It does not, as was expected, secure uniform justice, protection and opportunity for all its citizens. Many of the most patriotic people of America are proscribed, and their civil and natural rights ignored. Aliens are preferred to them; and in some sections they are prohibited from laboring for the common necessities of life. It seems to me that our good friend Alfred, here, has devised a better and more humane government. Would it not be better to recommit America to such a government?"

"Lincoln, at your request, and the urgent prayers of many of your people, a new birth was given them at Appomattox. Here their prayers centered around a single hope, that your happy conception of government should survive. The slave, the serf and the menial have no place in the idea 'a government of, for and by the people.' This assertion, a sublime definition of a democratic form of government, makes a clean sweep of it. The way must be open, free and clear for the ascension

of all alike. I do not mean all men are born into the world equal in intellectual, physical and moral strength; neither do I agree with the absurd idea that the color of a man's skin should tilt the scales in favor of his intelligence and morality. To my mind nothing is further from the truth.

"The violet and the rose are by no means the same; the delicate fineness of their beauty is graded; and he is a cunning chemist indeed who discovers which of the two has the sweeter essence. They both spring from the same earth, different in their natures, it is true, but equal in their opportunities to blow a perfect violet and a perfect rose. They are agreeable neighbors in the same soil; enjoying the same air, sunshine and showers, they are happy in the beneficence of the God of the flowers. Shall man expect less of the Prince of Love, Who commands us to consider the lilies of the field and the fall of the sparrows? And yet the church proscribes its members. Governments, civil and ecclesiastical, ought to conform to the will of God, Who delegates to them their powers.

"A government which will not protect the person and property of its citizens ought not to exist."

Here her visage grew stern and her mien awful; Washington's fingers clinched his sword; Jefferson began to write resolutions; and Lincoln, fearful of what might follow, began to rise, and, speaking as he rose, said: "I pray your excellency to deal lightly with America, and to remember that government of, for and by the people, shall not perish from the earth!"

"Oh Lincoln! Lincoln! Lincoln!" she exclaimed, "it is the wish of all that this idea should live forever ex-

emplified in the happiness of a united and prosperous people, but—”

Here there was a considerable commotion in the august assembly. Some one cried from under the throne: “I give my heart and hand to this vote.” Patrick Henry thrust his head from behind the judgment seat and cried, “Give me liberty or give me death!” Jefferson Davis came scrambling from behind the tombs with the statue of liberty under his arm; and Douglass, the grand old man, continued his battle for the oppressed.

While he was addressing Themis I heard the steps of many persons, and looking up beheld Vulcan and his associates approaching her. They compassed her and began to address her thus: “May it please your excellency, we understand you will preside at the next session of our court, and have come seeking an interview with you, and an understanding about a matter which may come before you for adjustment.”

At this Themis became indignant and cried out: “Hold, Vulcan, hold! I have heard of you and yours. It is not the business of judges to hear causes in secret; nor to acquaint themselves with facts in any case before it comes on for regular hearing. Courts are sacred things, and in their impartial judgment rests the safety of all the people. When once the courts of the land recognize favorites and yield clandestinely to the arguments of criminals, the security of life, person and property is swept away, and no man is safe. It is the business of judges to adjudicate the laws, not to make, warp nor twist them to suit the exigencies of the classes. I cannot entertain you now, gentlemen; but if you will meet me in the court room, I shall be pleased to listen

to any extenuating circumstances you may have to offer."

During these remarks Avarice seized her horn of plenty, Prejudice her golden scales, and Hate tore away her imperial robes. There was riot in the imperial chamber. Themis resorted to violence rather than argument in defense of her person; but to no purpose; the conspirators laid violent hands upon her, and dragged her away to the palace of Prejudice, the grandeur of which has been described before. Here they bound her with the chains of Flattery, and placed Prejudice on guard at the door. She was now at the mercy of Prejudice, and, lying still bound, he outraged her; whereupon, in due time, she conceived and brought forth that hydra, Judge Lynch.

BIOGRAPHIA.

I SAW sweep out of the unknown
 A worthy sunlit bark, alone,
 By eddies dallied and then thrown
 Down with Life's stream.

And on its frail though radiant prow,
 "Consigned to the unknown art thou,"
 Was stamped by Him, Who then, as now,
 Directs the end.

There went with it a being of hope—
 A radiant being of hope,
 An ethereal philanthrope,
 Somewhat divine.

She steered the craft hard by the shore—
 I heard the stroke of her golden oar.
 The silver thread of the streamlet o'er
 Throwing the spray.

Her cargo was of jewels rare,
 All luminous, splendid and fair:
 The ensign of a prince was there
 Undoubtedly.

Methinks I saw his armor there,
 Brilliantly grand, superb and rare,
 Whose shield was beaming ev'rywhere,
 Like a coronet.

And through the helmet of his robe
Two luminous orbs lit his abode,
And like the fixed stars brightly glowed
Continuously.

And near this dazzling light appears
A blazing meteor beneath the spheres,
Expression's guide of joy and fears
Incased in pearl.

This pearly armament's support
Is cunningly built, a coral fort
Compassed with ruby fleets, which float
Round there for aye.

And when its florid portals oped,
The cadence of the prince awoke
The music Mother Eve evoked
In Paradise.

Then the stream, grand, masterly stream,
Moved swiftly, silent and serene,
The bark and its fair guide between,
To run the falls.

But still she, with her skillful hand,
E'er taught the tottering craft to stand
The strain and shock of the rocky strand
Which lies below.

Where the stream runs its merry race
Of rapid, smooth and subtile grace,
The craft leaped o'er the falls, to face
The surge and whirl,

Of the deep, the grand and awful wave,
Where the frothy waters toil and rave
On in their course, as they engrave
 Their history.

And bickers on by sunlit hills,
Where Vanity Fair the passion fills.
And pompous pride in the breast instills
 A new desire.

Then out, and 'round the slippery curve
Where bold Maturity's heights subserve
The channel to deepen, and to swerve
 Its rapid flight.

Then down the rugged precipice,
Through the whirling pools of Error's bliss,
Where the troubled waters seethe and hiss
 A flood of tears.

Here, where youth's border land appears,
The gallant oarsman drops his fears,
And, king-like, o'er the floods he rears
 His stately head.

Then through green fields and sunny climes,
Where Cupid's violin strikes the chimes
Of melody's tunes and happy rhymes,
 The river runs.

Till o'er its purling waters came
The splash of golden oars again,
Dashing the silver spray like rain
 From Cupid's prow.

Where Evylin sat, an angel bright,
A fair, celestial angel bright,
Guiding another bark of light
Through Love's domain;

Where moon, and stars, and earth, and air
Seemed covered with the mystic snare,
Which Cupid throws to catch the fair
Angelic thing,

As she sweeps down the silver stream
Beneath the glow of beauty's beam,
With hope's, and love's, and fancy's gleam
Of wild delight,

Steering for that semi-paradise,
To the land where experience lies,
Where truth and wisdom harmonize
Youth's fervent fires.

Here many a green isle appears,
Along the stream, where the sunny years,
Of conjugal life devoutly wears
Contentment's crown.

Till the stream impetuous grows,
And pride, deceitful pride, blows
His clarion horn and goes
About the sails,

Of ev'ry ship which daily files,
Adown the stream by the sunny isles;
Where with them all fame flies and smiles
Bewitchingly.

Just flies and smiles; beguiles and tries
To lead all 'neath the sunny skies,
With windy inconsistencies
Off the Isles of Peace.

Till Ambition comes, an oarsman dark,
A stern, deceptive oarsman dark,
And takes possession of the bark.
And rows blindly on.

Where all the floods become untied
And pour their torrents far and wide,
From mountain side to mountain side,
Through the dismal swamp.

Ambition's meed, dark discontent,
And Fame's worthless emolument,
So often pledged, but seldom sent,
Till this good day.

Till the splendor of the old bark's glow,
Which all well knew in that long ago,
Is storm-driven so till we scarce know
What 'tis or does.

But I saw it with the billows toil,
When the turbulent stream's rough turmoil
Did its fair prospects taunt and foil,
And roll grumbling on.

Through bold tornadoes it had gone;
I saw the rent where Calumny's storm,
Swept through the sails and then hissed on
Relentlessly.

But the bark was a kingly one,
It weathered the storms; I saw it run
Grappling with the stream and overcome
The vicious winds

That stormed along the malignant strand,
Just where looms up the goodly land
Of Fame's domain and Fancy's grand
Expectantcy.

Again, I saw it sail, and sail,
Proud and defiant with the gale,
With hope, iron will, and nerves of mail
Combatting the fates.

Where the stream runs purling swift and strong
In its murmuring, liquid song
Breaking hope, and will, and nerves along
The cataract.

And still the craft sped with the wave.
On the crest of the billows laved,
Nor heeded the omnivorous grave
That yawned below

Where the river bold grew deep and wide;
Till it so placidly seemed to glide,
That its deceptive waves belied
Its rapid flight.

To the grand and deep old ocean wide,
Rolling in all its majestic pride,
Until the crest of its hoar tide
The river met.

There it eddied as if it would be still,
 And the oarsman, infirm and ill,
 Furl'd his sails, surrendered his will,
 And crossed his oars.

For that ruby bulwark, strong and bold,
 And those luminous orbs—now cold—
 Swing to and fro, a ruin old,
 Sacked at last by Time.

Who stands Death's oceanic mien!
 However mute the winds, bright the sheen.
 Or peacefully lulled the marine
 Which decoys him?

And if the zephyrs do play low,
 Light, soft and smooth the deep sea o'er
 They but waft the bark and its cargo
 Into port.

AFTERWARD.

I'M all alone in the world, now,
My bonnie love has flown;
My heart's an empty void, now,
Where the wreck of joy is strown;
For o'er her grave, the tombs between,
The grass is growing green.

I'm sad tonight! I did not know
How dear she was to me;
How fervent was her passion's glow,
Her love's sincerity;
Till o'er her grave, the tombs between,
The grass was growing green.

I would I could see her face again,
That furrowed face of care,
That I might woo away the pain
My coldness chiseled there;
And lie for her the tombs between,
Where the grass is growing green.

I somehow feel, since she has gone,
That negligence is crime:
That I am guilty of this wrong
To my eyelids brings the brine:
Since she lies cold the tombs between,
Where the grass is growing green.

AGE'S REJOINDER.

I WOULD not live always:
 I ask but to stay"
 In this vain world of shadows
 Just another day;
 By that other day I mean
 Three score years and ten,
 Then, perhaps. I'll take my leave
 Willingly, of men.

Yet, if it suits my Lord
 To lengthen the thread
 That tethers me to earth's shores,
 A few more years instead,
 Contentedly I'll plod on—
 With my crutch and cane
 Bear the weight of four score years,
 And not complain.

Live always? Of course not!
 But I'd like to see
 My span of years reeling down
 To the century.
 "What about my absent friends,
 And rheumatic foe?"
 I'll forget those, this endure,
 A year and a day more.

LOCOMOTION ON CORKS.

THINGS are not always what they seem. You walk along our streets and look up at massive structures of wood, brick and stone, where beauty has been left by the hand of educated and skilled labor. You stop to admire; and sweet strains of music float down from them on perfumed air, which sweeps playfully through flower gardens hard by.

This deceives you, and you imagine the occupants of those immense piles live and move in Elysian fields of happiness and ease. Let me undeceive you; that music is, indeed, from the children of the rich; but they are bidding adieu to the pleasures of youth unawares. They, like their parents and you, shall soon be treading the treacherous ways of life, and find at last that the calamities of the mansion and hut are almost identical: the owners of each are struggling for existence in their own little spheres.

Most of us are pursuing phantoms where the blandishments of life allure.

As man ascends toward the altitude of earthly greatness, his desires multiply. He is never satisfied. His life is a prolific source of trouble, and his end a shadow over which memory hovers a moment and then deserts him forever. The rich find it hard to locate the gates of Heaven,—that is, to find happiness. All they get from the inventory of fortune is what they eat, drink and wear, the feast of their eyes and the worry of their souls. The poor are miserable because they would be as the rich.

The contention of all is not the needs of Economy: but the demands of Extravagance. We exhaust ourselves in the pursuit of a phantom, and seek repose on a bed of roses, unmindful of the fact that the thorns are there. These are the thoughts which came to me, as I sat brooding over the history of her lost leg.

You would hear no more of these vague and indefinite thoughts; but the story of Locomotion on Corks? Well, here it is:

Some years ago I was traveling over the Louisville, New Orleans and Texas Railroad. I think it was December 24th, 1889. We boarded the cars at a little station some miles out from Greenville, Mississippi. As well as I can remember the place is named Burdett.

Several persons entered the cars at this place, among them a gentleman with a pig in a bag. What I saw aboard this train is among my vivid recollections. That man was like the pig he carried—a hog pure and simple. Among the other passengers of this car was a young lady of agreeable manners and rare beauty. Behind her sat an elderly lady, who had a pair of ganders with their long necks sticking through holes in a bag; and in front of her sat a man who was the happy owner of a brace of coon dogs. The dogs were chained together, and lay partly in the aisle of the car and partly under the seat. Further down the aisle two or three fellows, who had seen the saloons of Greenville, were standing, or rather trying to keep their equilibrium on the now moving cars. These young men were jovial and full of life. They seemed to be out on an excursion of pleasure. For that matter, however, no one who partakes of the enchantments of the beautiful little city can well do otherwise.

Fashionable places are its saloons, and for convivial refreshments there is none better.

"Miss, can I sit by you?" growled the man with the pig; and without waiting for an answer he dropped into the seat beside her. All were now seated but our convivial friends, and they were trying to keep their bodies erect; in this vain effort one of them stepped upon the dogs in the aisle and they yelped of distress and frightened the pig, which made its presence felt by rapid grunting; this disturbed the ganders, and they reached out their long necks and pecked alternately at pig and dogs.

The young lady, being of a nervous disposition, naturally grew alarmed. She appealed to the conductor for aid; but he was busy collecting tickets and passed into the car beyond. Whereupon the man with the pig said, "Keep quiet thar, Miss, or I'se gwine to hurt som' un. Stop kicken dat ar pig. I'se gitting mighty tired ob dis here thing; 'deed I is. Wheneber I gits on dis here cyar, some un ob you high fliers comes along and 'sturbs me. You'se so awfully nice dat a man can't git on board de cyars wid his property, but dat you is cur-lin' your lips in scorn. Dis thing am got to stop, do you hear?"

This fell like melted metal on the nerves of the young lady. She grew frantic and cried aloud, "Will not some one rid me of this fiend?" And in trying to escape she fell across a seat and sprained her arm.

One of the convivial gentlemen went to her assistance, aided her to a seat, and tried to console her; and, between his little hiccoughs, succeeded fairly well. His companions did not do so well with the old man with the pig. Their efforts to quiet him failed. Then they

dragged him to the aisle, and began to flog him unmercifully.

The confusion grew, the pig squealed, the dogs barked and the geese cackled. About this time the whistle blew, the bell rang, and the porter thrust his head into the car and cried out, "Ar-co-la! All out for Arcola." The train stopped and people began to crowd into the car. Among them were the officers of the law. They soon relieved us of the confusion, menagerie and all.

As they led the old man from the car, it became evident that he, too, had seen the saloons of Greenville: for he began to spew, and to swagger around distressingly.

After some moments the ponderous wheels of the powerful machine rolled over, the bell rang, the steam sizzed and we moved out, with the lights of Arcola flickering behind us.

Then the old woman, who we thought had left the car at Arcola, came scrambling from under the seats. She looked around for her geese, but the birds were nowhere to be found. They had taken the wings of the evening and flown to parts unknown. She felt her loss keenly. Then I learned the true value of a Christmas dinner, and the confusion its loss can produce. The old lady, thinking of the toothsome viands of tomorrow, exclaimed, "Oh! I have lost my Christmas dinner! What will the children do?" She ran toward the door, fell, and broke her leg. She was left at the next station, where she was properly cared for. We then rattled along the rail without further trouble.

Some weeks later I was summoned to court to testify against the railroad company, in favor of an old lady, in

a suit for ten thousand dollars—damage sustained by her in her vain pursuit of a pair of ganders.

It is astonishing to what enormous proportions a little incident like the breaking of an old lady's leg, by mere accident, to which her own indiscretion had altogether contributed, can be expanded, under the creative genius of a shrewd lawyer.

I confess that after I heard the lawyers describe that scene, upon the testimony I had myself given, and which I thought would have exonerated the company, I believed the company guilty of extreme negligence. So convinced was I of the negligence of the company, that I actually apologized to her lawyers for not being more pronounced in my statement in her favor; notwithstanding the fact that I knew at the time of my testimony, and I know now, that the company was guilty of no negligence in this case.

The jury returned a verdict in favor of the old lady. The case was appealed, and vibrated between the courts for many terms, till she got tired of her crutch, and compromised for attorney's fees and a light, artistic wooden leg. To sum up the whole matter, her attorneys received two thousand dollars, I received fifty dollars' worth of witness certificates, which I have never been able to collect; and the old lady received an artificial leg.

She took her leg and departed. I thought no more about her for a long time; but one day, as I sat in my office during one of those melancholy depressions which will come to most of us, she flashed into my mind; and I could not put from me the scenes I have narrated here: when suddenly there was a great noise and commotion in the streets below. I ran to the window and looked out. Men, women and children were running

about the streets in the wildest confusion. The newsboys were running to and fro the crowded streets, yelling at the top of their voices, "Here's your daily evening Chronicle. Extra! All about yellow fever in the city!" My fingers buried their nails into the palms of my hands, and my hair stood tiptoeing on my head; involuntarily I exclaimed, "The pestilence!" and sat down. Then there came a message from my wife urging me to take her out of the city, to which I gave my hearty consent. I then called on the ticket agent and found out at what time the next train would leave for Chicago. The agent answered promptly, "At three fifteen P. M.; and all trains will stop at Newman's Switch, two miles north of the city." After purchasing our tickets I hired a cab and sent after my wife; with instructions for her to meet me at Newman's Switch, at three o'clock. I then nailed down my windows, locked my doors and with my valuable papers under my arm, I walked across the street to my banker, deposited them and drew a check for five hundred dollars. It was now forty-five minutes after two. I mounted my wheel and rode leisurely down Main Street, until I reached Railroad Avenue. Here I met the cab-man, who told me that my wife was at Newman's Switch waiting for me. After leaving him I hurried off for the Switch. Now if there is anything on earth at which I am proficient, it is in riding a bicycle. I leaned forward, applied my strength and moved along the avenue like a winged thing.

About a mile out from the city I saw a female figure, afoot, turn into the high road, reach down and gather up her skirts and strike boldly out for the Switch, about a quarter of a mile distant. I undertook to catch her; a little more pressure on the pedals and a deeper curve in

my spine and the city dropped behind me like the fall of a detached kite; but the lady bounded along ahead of me like a spirit. A moment more, however, and I overtook her. I slowed up a little, raised my hat, and was passing in triumph, when I struck a sharp instrument in the road and punctured my wheel; I dismounted and she passed me.

We were now not more than three hundred yards away from the Switch. I threw the bicycle across my shoulder, and started out after that woman again. Her speed seemed supernatural. I overtook her only when she politely asked some one at the station "if the train was on time?"

Then she turned to me and said, "Mr. Roland. I am glad to see you. How have you been getting along since last we met?"

Imagine my great surprise to find in her the old lady with the cork leg.

LINES TO MR. ———

FRIEND, must we part and part forever?
The spell that bound our hearts is broke—
Did I say "friend"? Excuse me.—brother;
I would the word I'd never spoke.

And brother, too, I should forget,
Since you the sacred tie would spurn
T' indulge the passions which have met
'Round our friendship's broken urn.

And yet it's hard and passing strange
That one brief hour should sever us;
And that a broken pledge should change
Hearts for a thing so odious.

But I had learned to trust you so—
Thought you so far above mankind.
So noble, and so true—when, lo!
Deception's wand strikes you blind.

Blind to all that we used to be,
Blind to all that we ought to be.
Blind still to yourself and me—
Blind even to vile treachery.

But should fortune e'er desert you,
Fate mark for you a rugged lot,
For what you ought to be I'll serve you,
And of your treachery think not.

STRIKE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS.

THINK of the price of liberty,
Think of the lash and slavery,
Of lynch rule and its massacre
And strike for equal rights.

Say, must we longer trust the law,
Class-enacted to hide the flaw
Of the crimson hand that strikes to awe
And terrorize us into slaves?

Let him who trembles or has fears,
When the cowardly mob appears,
Receive a coward's meed and tears,
Death and a piece of hemp.

Where the American who would be
A renegade to liberty;
Because of fear would turn and flee,
When duty calls him here.

He should be yoked and bound for aye,
As long as night succeeds the day—
For liberty can only stay,
The meed of valiant men.

He who fears not the mob's alarm:
To him who would the traitors storm,
And fell them with a valiant arm,
Behold a freeman's meed!

Come the valiant, and come the brave,
Come all except the abject slave—
Let him fall in a bondman's grave—
And strike for liberty!

Come all the law abiding, come.
Where'er throughout the earth you roam,
And strike for native land and home,
For God and sacred life.



WHILE THE WALTZ IS ON.

ERE the banquet's over, love,
And the stars are gone;
Before the garlands wither, love,
While the waltz is on,
Whisper softly in my ear
Love's melody, my dear.

While the waltz is on, my dear,
And the music's roll
Echoes through the hall so clear.
So happy makes the soul,
As we reel and turn and whirl
Say yes, my bonny girl.

Ere the dance is done, sweetheart,
Before the music dies,
Make me glad, before we part,
Complete my paradise;
Just before the music's gone,
And while the waltz is on.

THE MUSIC OF THE RAIN.

THERE'S music in the rain,
As on the roof it drops,
And its monotonous tap, tap
Beats on the window pane;
Or murmuring it stops
A moment on the dripping eaves.

There's music in the rain
When it falls the leaves among,
And spatters in the viney nooks
And sparkles on the grain;
All earth has found a tongue,
And its loud hallelujahs ring.

Oh! the music of the rain,
See it comes pouring down,
Bright and joyous o'er field and plain,
While its golden currents drain
The smooth and verdured lawn,
And then run bickering to the main.

There's music in the rain,
When all the winds arise,
And livid lightning marks the path
Of the dread hurricane;
While in the clouded skies
Old thunder beats the martial airs.

There's music in the rain

When all the winds are still,
 When lightning's flash and thunder's roll
 Are stilled and mute again;
 And you feel the heart's thrill
 When the storm cloud goes racking by.

There's music in the rain
 When the clouds are clearing off,
 And sunny beams come struggling through
 The silver of the rain,
 Where hope's arch stands aloft
 In the reflux of the storms.



IDA.

SHE is a woman, bright and trim,
 Of five and twenty years,
 Who trips along with pleasure
 And spends her smiles for tears.

Her hair retains its raven hue,
 Her sparkling eye its fire;
 But her heart is sad, discordant,
 A strung, but tuneless lyre.

For she staked her all on conquest
 Of the voluptuous host.
 With society's devotees
 Bet high, played long and lost.

She's wiser now than yesterday,
 At last she spurns the dream
 That women were made for pleasurè.
 And men are what they seem.

NUPTIAL TIES.

I HAVE my depressions. I suppose you have yours? In short, my dear reader, they are the common possession of man-kind. Activity is the soul of depression. Who can escape the peculiar sensation bundled up in the afterthought? The thing grows on you, or rather on me, in this way.

You go out in the morning, full of hope, vigor and courage; you push your business till success bubbles up around you like an artesian well; you look up and see Fame sitting on the rim of the clouds, tooting a horn, and looking down; you see Popularity elbowing your vanished rival from the crowded thoroughfare; the day is done, and the victory won.

Now you make your way home through the cheering crowds, and slip in through the back gate, to avoid the pressing thousands who stand around eager to doff their hats to the victor. You reach your inner chamber, pull off your gloves, your hat and great coat; thrust your feet into soft slippers and begin to thaw your fingers; when suddenly the afterthought comes home. You have forgotten your friends. You rush to the window to acknowledge your thanks—the applauding millions are no more—they are gone.

Now you know how the other fellow felt, and feels, because their paeans of joy make the night hideous with his praise. Ah me! the possession of fame is so uncertain that a man cannot stop to warm his fingers, however much they freeze.

Oh, yes! I remember: you asked me about Nuptials;

and I have gone off on depressions. But you know that is ever the result of nuptials. They always resolve themselves into depressions.

Before I begin the discourse, I wish to say that I am a bachelor of seventy serene summers. Summers serene, because they are things of the past.

Since the day of my first love affair, I have refrained from thoughts of this nature, that I might escape the memory of so blank a failure.

I blush as I confess to you my ignorance of wedded life, and the necessary requisites for a happy home. However, for such a condition, I think this a good receipt: labor, confidence, fortitude, economy, thrift and love, mixed with content, and taken in the order named.

"Who are proper persons to bear the burden of married life?" To this I answer: all persons who are over the age of twenty-one years, sound in body and mind, economic by nature, and in full control of their tempers and tongues. This, however, is but a mere suggestion. I cannot persuade myself to say more, because I am aware that seventy years of celibacy unfit one for judgment in such matters. I can do but this: relate my observation. Listen, and I will tell you what I caught in passing.

Generally, people are careless about whom they marry; and more careless about what they should do with themselves after the honeymoon. Long after that delightful period has been transferred to the column of vain regrets, I have heard many sadly soliloquizing on "what might have been."

To illustrate: one is naturally captivated by a fair face, raven hair, dark eyes, bewitching features, a beautifully tapering and rounded form, a few frills, flounces,

furbelows, and other things which dazzle, and proposes, is accepted and strikes a bad bargain for life.

Beware of beautiful women; they make poor wives and worse mothers. There are few exceptions to this rule; especially is this the case when they worship at the shrine of fashion, with "Society" as the goddess.

A collegiate education, vast and varied accomplishments in music, decorative art, and the sciences, have some points in their favor; but she who has an academic training, is a tidy housekeeper and a good cook, is far more preferable; and if you can find, added to these qualities, a soft temper, chastity and frugality, you have found a jewel whose value cannot be estimated.

I have such a woman in my mind's eye; she presided over the home of my friend Coatland years ago. His was a home of happiness, comfort and ease. I do not mean that he had a palatial dwelling, broad and fertile acres, fine horses carriages and princely companions, endless treasures and such things; for in such a home happiness is rarely, if ever, found.

Out on the high road that leads from George Town, a suburb of V——, there stands a small old fashioned log cabin; modernized, it is true, by a new brick chimney, a few glass windows and a front gallery. In all other respects it is the same today as when I first knew it fifty years ago. There the green lawn slopes down to the road; and there still are the white-washed walls, fences, stables, cribs and other houses, as bright and cheerful as lime and brush can make them.

At the east window the sunbeams struggle through sweet-scented honeysuckles into the room beyond, where for fifty years, Ruth met the morning, with brush, broom and tidiness, polishing her walls, floors and furniture;

kneading her bread and doing a thousand other things common to housekeeping. In her well kept garden the lilac, cape jasimine, cherry pies, roses and other flowers kept the place perfumed.

Her husband found in her a companion, wife and friend who was sincere in her affections. She loved him and found that sentiment returned a thousand fold. They were industrious and frugal—happy in their ignorance of the stock exchange, where fortunes are made and lost in a day.

All things earthly must fail; the good prematurely. My friends enjoy their reward. It is impossible to describe the death of the supremely good; that is, those to whom God imputeth righteousness. They meet their end in peace with their fellows; and, with the approval of their God, they pass away in a halo of glory. Peace be to their ashes!

On their death bed they handed me their will. It reads as follows:

To whom it may concern: This is our last will and testament. Our spirits we commend to our Maker, God, who gave them. All our earthly goods and property of every kind and nature, we give to our two sons, Carl and Eugene, in equal parts, except a small donation we have given to our old friend, George Leland, who is made the executor of this, our last will without bond.

In testimony whereof we hereto affix our signatures this the 10th day of March, 1880.

THOMAS COATLAND, [seal]

RUTH COATLAND. [seal]

Among their papers I found a letter addressed to me, in which were placed my instructions and one thousand dollars in U. S. bonds, the donation to me, and a letter to Carl and Eugene; which, excepting the introduction, reads as follows:

“My Dear Children: It is not expected that we, after seventy

years of activity in the affairs of life, should survive a great while longer. I wish before I am gone to again impress you with the course in life I think proper for you.

"Fifty years ago I married Ruth, your mother, during which time we have occupied this little home. Here, aided by thrift, content and economy we have found happiness, comfort and ease. I can wish you no greater felicity than virtuous, frugal and industrious wives; and a home such as the one in which you were reared. You do not need a mansion, because it requires a fortune to keep it; and when it is well kept, the covetousness of your friends and acquaintances is excited. Be careful: he who displays his treasures invites the robber.

"We leave about twenty thousand dollars, which we believe you will fully appreciate and judiciously invest. This sum, the fruit of our economy, is the savings of many years. Take it, and be admonished thereby that fortunes are not honestly made in a day, nor in many years; but that rigid economy and vigilant industry will relieve you of that terror known to nine-tenths of mankind—hard times.

"Beware of debt; he who is in debt is but half a man, and his independence is dethroned. There is no master so exacting as the money lender. I do not mean to say that he is a bad man, for that is not always the case. In many respects he is the best of men; especially is this the case when he counts out his cold cash to the unfortunate who goes about borrowing; and not until the day of payment do they reverse themselves.

"From the day you mortgage your property till the time of the foreclosure of it, there is not a day in which your ability to pay is not becoming less. I cannot explain why it is so; but few men pay off a mortgage. When you have put by a competency sufficient to carry you over those depressions commonly called hard times, you can afford to indulge in those little extravagances which the simple call generosity, but which the want of many a stranded home defines as crime. The temptation to extravagance is great; but you must not yield when that enemy to your peace of mind comes, as come it will.

"Look upon the poor and miserable of your acquaintance, who go about the streets pawning their raiment for bread, and re-

member that nine-tenths of them heeded not the voice of Economy, but followed Extravagance.

"He who squanders his earnings in the pursuit of pleasure, shall find after the reverie the confusion of its adherents. Spend your nights with your families, your days in honest toil, and you will find old age invested in a halo of ease, for which the nabobs of earth, those whose souls have been singed by the fires of voluptuousness, would exchange the wealth of the Indies.

"Be not deceived by the glare of great riches; it may be best for you that you are poor. Like the moths which wreck themselves on your mother's lamp, many a poor fellow has lost his soul in the vain effort to become rich. After all, that scathing satire on the affairs of men, the shroud is the sum total of all our wealth. Riches and happiness are by no means companions; the one means to its possessor great anxiety, worry, cares, restless evenings and sleepless nights; the other is often found in a hovel, sustained and soothed by the virtues of content. Poverty and riches both have great calamities, when content is absent; then their extremes move together in the mire of distress, and urge their patrons along the common way, to the banquet hall of worms. Envy them not.

"Be true to your God, you country, yourselves and your friends; upright and just in your dealings with men; and strive to secure a middle station between poverty and wealth; and remember your father and mother.

"I am as ever yours devotedly, THOMAS COATLAND."

I have given you my friend's letter verbatim, because I believe he is right. That his letter meets your approval I doubt not. It comes nearer answering you than anything of which I could have thought.

I have seen some of the phases of life myself, although in a different light, and from a different point of view than my friend's; yet I believe the result the same.

Unlike my friend, I have followed pleasure where she has been pleased to lead; under the brilliant glare of the chandelier, where wit, beauty and loveliness moved intoxicated with the volumptuous swell of rare and exquisite music, admired by the timid, courted by the brave, and

won by the gallant. I have been entertained by all that is fair, sweet, brilliant, charming and graceful in women and fraternal in men; in beautifully decorated parlors and rare and brilliant saloons, where wealth, skill and art left the foot prints of the embellisher. In fact, I have tasted every flower in the garden of pleasure, and know of a truth that a man gets very little of this world's goods beyond what he eats, drinks and wears.

If I had married Evylin in the days of my youth, perhaps she would not have found an early grave, nor I a remorseful old age with Coatland's donation as its only stay.

This is why, no doubt, my old friend Coatland and his happy home come before me now, as they ever do when I am in a serious humor, for his was the most happy of the few happy homes I remember having seen. And now, after seventy years spent in the pursuit of pleasure, I find myself reverting to those sublime lines of Robert Burns:

“Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care,
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.”

Yes, if I were you I would marry a good woman, and build a home; for around that hearth where the chastity of woman presides is gathered what little there is of happiness on earth.

I would build it, not in the city nor too remote from it; but near its suburbs, that I might escape its burdensome taxation, its pestilence, its poverty and its many vices, and secure easy access to its advantage.

THE GOLDEN ROD.

THERE is a calm and solemn air
 Along the road, by garden fair,
 By rushing stream, and ev'rywhere
 The sear and yellow leaf's aglow.

The foliage is growing old;
 All through the verdure gleams the gold;
 The rose is turning into mold;
 But golden rod stands ev'rywhere.

O'er the lea and across the mead,
 And far away where the cattle feed,
 There blows the yellow crested reed,
 The autumnal queen of flowers.

Its golden crown along the way,
 Sways back and forth, and seems to say.
 "I am fair Flora's Queen today,
 And the wind's my messenger boy.

"And further on the wind's low wail
 Proclaims my reign along the dale,
 Till the tired harvester drops his flail
 And hails me queen of the flowers."

YELLOW JACK OF '97.

WITH a shudder still I remember
The alarm of Yellow Jack:
Sent out in the daily number,
Of the "Times-Democrat."

Also the "Daily Picayune"
Made the dreaded tidings known;
The paper venders caught the tune
And heralded it around the town.

"Here's your 'Daily Picayune,'"
And "Here's your 'Times-Democrat!'"
"Paper, sir, 'Daily Picayune,'
All about the Yellow Jack!"

"At Ocean Springs and Scranton, sir,
Biloxi and ev'rywhere
Along the coast—"Picayune,' sir?
All about the fever there!"

"There 'tis, sir! a catastrophe,
Strikes our business interest square,
And leaves us a wreck in mid sea,
With fever and despair."

"If it's fever, it's dengue,
Or malaria from lack
Of cleanliness, in a few
Coast towns. It's not Yellow Jack,"

Said all the doctors, looking wise.

But the restless feeling grew,
And all the people, with glaring eyes,
And ashen lips, said "It's true!"

From the start business stopped, congealed,
And strong men gathered the crowd
About the public streets, to feel
The business pulse, sigh aloud;

And then to troop it out of town:
For their fancy paints so well,
Until it kinder brings them down,
To unwholesome views of (——) Well—

You understand; roasting scenes in that
Sultry country where the swell
Epidemic fiend, grim Yellow Jack,
The conductor acts so well.

You talk of being panic struck,
Routed friend and all of that;
You should see the bulletin stuck
To the alarm of Yellow Jack.

For yellow fever 'larms from press
And newsboys, can clear the earth
With inflated yells of distress
In twenty minutes without death.

And then the faithful few, who stand
At duty's post; because
They cannot escape, understand,
Prohibitory laws.

They quarantine the empty void
With a mailed guard so well,
That 'twould terrorize the alloid
Visage of the host of Hell.

Then gnaws the formidable thought,
Quarantined away from home:
This experience so dearly bought,
So vividly paints our own:

Till we see the ghost of all our hopes
Floating down the yellow stream;
Our empty homes along the copse
And grim Yellow Jack between.

And hear the stroke of the sturdy oar,
The surge of the awful wave;
As Yellow Jack trips our loved ones o'er—
The druggist into the grave.

YOUTH'S HOME AND MOTHER.

DOWN the long flight of years,
 With the fleet sweep of time,
 Our memory still bears
 On the one place sublime,
 Of all that earth holds of joy and of mirth,
 And that place, friend, is the place of our birth.

The gay may dazzle the eye,
 For a time brightly blaze
 Then dimly burn and die;
 Then 'tis we fix and gaze
 On all that earth holds of joy and of mirth,
 Down the dim vista ways of long ago.

Friendship may fail and fly
 Off by night and our joy,
 With the breath of morning die:
 Naught be ours but alloy,
 And all that earth holds of joy and of mirth,
 Youth's home and mother and her sterling worth

Deep as is the ocean's brine,
 Love will trace her epitaph,
 Along the strand of time;
 Where stands the biograph
 Of all the nation's worth, its cares and mirth
 In mother's love, and faith, and works, and home.

These will blaze, burn and glow

Until the end of time;
Till again we meet, and know
Our parting was sublime!
Till we meet and know, where the ransomed go,
Up the endless aisles of paradise.



INNOCENCE ASLEEP.

A FAIR dark-eyed lassie was she,
Her thirteenth summer passed,
Who pursuing blue-eyed daisy,
Herself had over-tasked;
And fell asleep in the meadow,
Where the wildest flowers blow.
I read the dreams upon her face.
Through dimples in her cheek,
And smiles which trace the subtle grace
Of innocence asleep.

"I was dreaming," she made reply,
A blush her whole physique,
When my kerchief fell upon the fly
That lit upon her cheek;
Hard by the laughing brooklet's sheen
Caught the poise of her face between,
Demurring pout and sly grimace,
Through her dishelved hair;
As she stood there an angel fair
With innocence awake.

THE RAPE OF THE FLOWERS.

WAILS, wails, wails,
 The wind from its ice bound thrones;
 Along the path it trails,
 And whistles and roams
 Across the gray old fields.

Sweeps, sweeps, sweeps,
 Together the falling leaves,
 And up the hillside leaps
 Through the naked trees;
 There shrieks, and roars, and storms;

And shakes, shakes, shakes
 His mantle that holds the snows
 Till the mute and silent flake,
 Its purity throws
 O'er all the dreary earth.

Then drives along the rain,
 The cold benumbing rain;
 Across the dreary plain,
 Blows the hurricane
 And freezes o'er the snow.

Till all is hard, cold ice,
 Transparent, luminous ice,
 Whose dumb but stern device
 The rivers entice
 To stand at last congealed.

Weeping now the angels go,
Since Winter's seductive hand
Polluted lovely Flo,
And his grim command
Her nectary fills with ice.

At the kiss of hoar frost,
The radiant angel swooned,
Of dire grief died, and lost
Her beautiful bloom—
Her rare ethereal bloom.



TO A FLOWER ON A CORPSE.

AlH, thou beautiful embellishment of earth,
By dew, and rain, and dutiful spring hurled,
A thing of loveliness, into this world
Of woe, and discord, and the cruel dearth
That blights our desires, and turns our hearth
Into a charnel house; nor king, nor earl,
Nor wit, can provoke the sad heart to mirth,
Where our hopes all end and our colors furl.
Fit emblem of man's transient stage art thou;
This morn beheld thee delightfully fair,
Full of fragrance, pleasingly sweet; but now,
This eve, thy withered form sleeps on the prow
Of that barque grim Death is launching out there,
In the omnivorous sea of despair.

A MANGLED REFLECTION.

WHEN my reflection swings back to that delightful period known as the honeymoon, I am forced to the painful conclusion that connubial attachments are not what they seem. That you may better understand me I wish to enumerate a few phases of my experience. December 24th, 1892, I married Malicia Ann Dupont. The grace of her angelic form, and the buoyancy of her noble soul made her the rarest object of loveliness I ever saw.

Under the bewitchery of her elegance our honeymoon was prolonged into a full luna year. Then there came a change, and I was left face to face with the stern fact that love begets other things than happiness.

About this time there was born unto us a son, and my heart went out to him with all the fervency of parental affection. The child grew, and his features took on my likeness; and when he began to prattle and call me father, I felt exceedingly manly; especially so when Fancy told me I had a new joy. At this time I prided myself on the high regard I had for the rights of others; and, true to this trait in my character, I heeded not the growing attachment between my wife and my old college friend, Samuel Michaeljohn. Malicia is of a witty and lively disposition and socially inclined; and I am sedate and somewhat of a melancholy turn of mind; this is why, I suppose. I spent my evenings at home, while she sought happiness in the halls of pleasure. Up to this time there was not a discordant sound in our Eden of joy. But alas! too soon I found that Joy and Grief both marshal

their strength in the human heart, with only a step between the bivouac of their forces.

Michaeljohn was staying with us at the time, and used to accompany my wife on her delightful excursions. After this had been going on for a long time, I had a sudden and serious awakening. My imagination, urged on by jealousy, saw strange things in the conduct of my wife and friend. They seemed lost in the mutuality of their attachment. My son, losing his health, became ill, crabbed and colicky. My neighbor's cat prowled about my house and made the evenings hideous with its squalling. Decidedly a change set in for the worst, and I was ill at ease.

"None of these things would have moved you?"

Ah my friend! If you think that you are deceived by your own heart. At any rate, I am persuaded that if you knew what I know, you would agree with me that the joys of wedded life are casual.

My troubles reached an acute stage on the night of my awakening. As usual the infatuated couple were attending one of their innumerable entertainments; on this occasion it was a masquerade ball. About eleven o'clock that night the baby had one of its usual attacks of the colic, which was more aggravated than ever before, and would not yield to my efforts to arrest its course, although I used every drug known to domestic medicine. Vein endeavor! the child grew rapidly worse. Alarmed at the progress of his sickness, I went to the telephone and rang hard and strenuously for the family physician. "He is out. Has been for an hour. Expect him every minute. Will send him over as soon as he comes," were the disappointing words which came over the wires.

Poor, stricken child! Tortured and agonized with

the deadly cramp in his bowels, his cries appealed imploringly to me. With a struck heart and a throbbing brain I raised him again in my arms, and paused a moment, listening to the noise of a footfall on the pavement, vainly hoping it might be the doctor, or the homecoming of Malicia Ann; but it passed, echoing in the silent night.

Again I began to walk the floor with him, and with my cracked voice tried to warble a lullaby. I thought I had succeeded when a bright smile ran playfully about his mouth, and lit up his countenance with a light I never saw there before. Vain belief! The next moment he turned his glazed eyes up into mine, cried "Father!" and fell over on my breast a corpse! The light of my soul was darkened and its joy slain. I laid the corpse on the bed, and with it my heart, and walked out on the back porch to give my grief full scope. There was an emptiness in my bosom, and a great lump in my throat, a burning liquid was scalding my eyes and my mind was wandering; need I tell you that I wept aloud? There was no moon, but every star of the firmament was out; with their infinite beings joyous in the felicity of the omnipotent God; while I, poor worm of the dust, was groping in the dark, with baby's last audible sound ringing in my ears. Was it a wail, or an exclamation of joy? In quest of this thought my hope mounted upward till faith unbarred the gates of Heaven, and I saw the merciful Christ wiping the tears from baby's eyes; and heard the angels chanting to him the lullabies of heaven. My eyes were moist no longer, my soul was relighted, and I felt a sustaining influence in my heart from the moment my faith caught hold of Him who doeth all things well. I returned to the silent chamber, and waited for Malicia Ann.

Sitting there alone my thoughts naturally turned to her; bright, gay and cheerful, pleasure's reign so long absolute in her heart, now to be shattered by the relentless hand of fate, and remorseless grief enthroned—how should I break the sad intelligence to her? In the midst of my solitude I heard her at the gate, bidding a merry good night to her gay associates. I met her at the door. She was a lovable and playful woman, and, as she always does, she threw her arms around my neck, and hung upon my person looking, in her white robes, like a seraphim; and begun to tell me of her enjoyable evening, when the lamp light fell upon my face. Its haggard aspect appalled her. She recoiled and cried, "O George! what has happened?" I took her by the hand, with the unrestrained tears coursing down my cheeks, and stammered, "Baby's gone!"

Wild with grief she hurried back to where I had lain him and bent over him with that endearing accent only a mother can utter, said, "Charley!" and kissed him: but there was no responsive pressure from the lips of cold clay before us. She raised her dark eyes staringly to mine, and with the agony of despair cried, "Give me back my baby!" pulled her hair. rent her clothing and fell to the floor insane of grief. We helped her to a sofa and ministered to her the best we could; but her grief was of that violent nature which escapes only through the relief of tears, and we could not appease her.

About four o'clock the next day all that was mortal of our little Charley, was gathered to its long home, and a slab marked its repose.

The events of a day sometimes change the whole course of our lives, but they never change our characters. It is as impossible to confine a buoyant and lively spirit

with crape and mourning as it is to destroy the beauty of a sunbeam when it disperses itself in a shower of rain.

We are what we are, in spite of ourselves; and, like the circling of the seasons through the succeeding years, we pass on, guided, perhaps, by the unseen Hand that holds the rivers in their courses and fixes the bounds of the sea.

Time passed, and we naturally drifted back into our old habits. Michaeljohn and Malicia Ann renewed their former relations, and I spent my evenings at home brooding over imaginary evils; or in roaming about the country mourning the absence of my son; and—I am ashamed to say it, but it is true—accusing Malicia of his death. How could I do otherwise under the circumstances?

I remember one bright morning in the spring of a vanished year, I went out for a long walk over the country. The first two or three hours of my journey, were calm, bright and delightful. The yellow rays of the morning sun illumined the earth with a soft mellow light; through which the south wind flitted with an invigorating coolness. Buzzing bees, singing birds, and the tinkling bells of the herds enlivened the landscape which, pregnant with the odor of new blown flowers, stretched out undulatingly before me. I strolled on, delighted with the variegated beauty of the rural scenes, till somewhat fatigued I passed down a declivity and found a spring and a plot of green earth. Here I stooped to quench my thirst and sat under the trees to rest. The majestic sun climbed up the deep blue of the heavens and filled the earth with his white light, and in the distance a winding horn reminded me of the farmer's nooning. Then a horse neighed; and, looking up, I saw several weary and travel-worn horses feeding

on the green, and further on two or three covered wagons, which I recognized at once to be the property of that wandering tribe known as Gypsies. In a short while a dark-eyed woman, about thirty years of age, came to the spring for water. She passed close to me, and began a conversation, in the course of which she said in a sweet musical way, "Something troubles you, sir. Let me tell your fortune?" I held out my hand and she began her revelations, all of which it is useless to mention. It is enough to say that among other things she told me was: "Strange to say there's a man in your case. He will pass this way soon."

Presently there was the noise of wheels and a horse swinging along the highway in a brisk trot. The driver reigned in the horse and said in a familiar way, "Hello, George! Jump in and let's ride back to the city." The driver was Michaeljohn. Unconsciously I bit my finger nails; and the coloring of my face must have betrayed my emotions, for when I rose to get in the buggy the dark-eyed woman said in a whisper, "Beware of thy friend! This is the man." I threw her a coin and we rode off toward the city.

No musician ever played upon a stringed instrument with more skill than that woman did upon my emotions, the effect of which was that jealousy, long dormant in my heart, now became the ruling passion of my being; against which my reason rebelled, and kept on arguing that he who sees not with his own eyes, nor conceives with his own mind is still in the dark.

This argument so far prevailed that I at last made up my mind to know the whole truth; and if my suspicions were well grounded to sever my connections with

Malicia Ann forever; if they were not, then to confess my errors and forsake them.

To this end I organized a thorough system of secret service detection, and set spies over the victims of my suspicions, who reported to me daily. These reports, together with those of Madame Rumor, were set in every coloring known to descriptive discourse, but that which my soul craved for. They neither alleged nor denied the guilt of Malicia Ann: but they managed to keep me in a terrible state of confusion for about a year.

Finally I dismissed my emissaries and went into the accursed business myself. Then came the pernicious affair of slipping into and out of, through and around my own house, with that lynx-like tread which cowardice lends to jealousy; the result of which was a continuation of the perplexity in which the dark-eyed Gypsy and my emissaries had placed me. Thinking my plans were detected, I concocted a new scheme.

Early one morning I told my wife I should be out of town for several days, and requested her to look after my mail. That afternoon I, heavily disguised as a tramp, passed her, undetected, on my office steps, hurried home and locked myself in the pantry. About eight o'clock in the evening she came in, and later Michaeljohn came. After the usual salutation they retired to their own rooms for the night.

I do not know why; but it is nevertheless true, that around every act of ours there is always a clue, incident or circumstance which leads to the disclosure of our designs, however much we may wish to secrete them. They may emanate from ourselves or be concomitant with the acts of other persons or things, over which we have no control.

It was June 23rd, 1894, and the clock was on the stroke of midnight; the sweet notes of Malicia Ann's guitar died melodiously away. I knew the music well, it was the same old air to which I had played the accompaniment on my violin a hundred times, during the first year of our nuptials—surely she must be thinking of me; instantly I turned my eyes in on my own wicked heart and began meditating a confession: when suddenly there broke out in the pantry the ear-splitting squall of Bill Jones' tom cat. I began hurriedly to unbolt the door, at which, as soon as it was ajar, the cat jumped and lit squarely on my head and entangled itself in my long hair. In its fright it began to scratch and bite terrificly. I threw up my hands and caught it by the fore feet and neck, and ran abruptly into my wife's room, uttering exclamations of rage and terror. This terrified her and she screamed awfully.

Michaeljohn heard the noise, and thinking there were burglars in the house, came down the stairs at a rapid rate. I tugged away at the frantic thing on my head, and by the time he reached the hall door I had succeeded in strangling it, and its crushed carcass lay bleeding beneath my heel.

I stepped hurriedly across to the right of the door, which, if it were open, would partially hide me from view; but not enough to keep my whole person from being reflected by a large mirror which hung against the opposite wall.

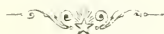
The breaking open of the door was but the work of a moment for the enraged man. He entered, fixed his eye upon me; nerved himself for the awful deed and deliberately took his aim.

Terrorized by the impending danger, I threw up my

hands, and in the anguish of despair cried, "Oh Lord!! Merciful God! help, help! Mike, are you going to kill me?" He recognized my voice, but it was too late. There was a flash of fire, a puff of smoke and all was over. The ball went crashing through the mirror. I was unhurt: but my reflection was terribly mangled: for it was at this Michaeljohn took his aim.

The excitement subsided and Malicia Ann (God bless her!) dressed the wounds made by the cat. After which I made a straight forward and open confession of the guilt of my misgivings; of which this narration is but an extract. Such were the occurrences which happened in the home of David Overhead, as told me by David himself.

Finale.



[illegible][illegible]

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